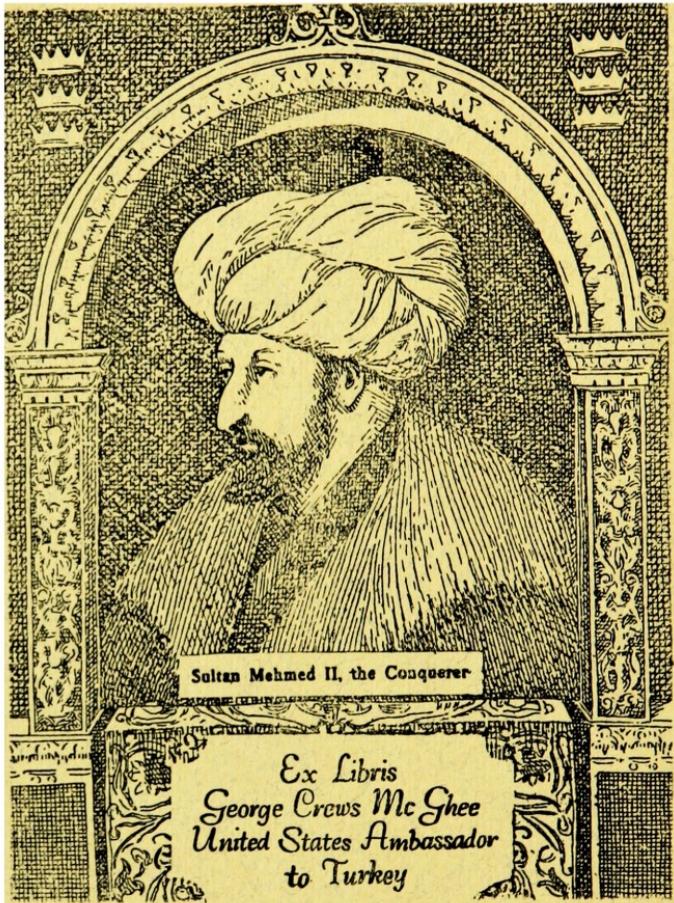


McGhee
656
vol. 1



Ex Libris
George Crews McGhee
United States Ambassador
to Turkey



Yours truly
John Barker

SYRIA AND EGYPT UNDER THE LAST FIVE SULTANS OF TURKEY:

BEING
EXPERIENCES, DURING FIFTY YEARS, OF
MR. CONSUL-GENERAL BARKER.

CHIEFLY FROM HIS LETTERS AND JOURNALS,
EDITED BY HIS SON,
EDWARD B. B. BARKER,
HER MAJESTY'S CONSUL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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1876.

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P R E F A C E.

IN placing these pages before the public, we do so with diffidence and beg indulgence. The papers and letters herein transcribed were never intended for publication ; they were chiefly the sudden effusions of the Consul-General to his friends ; many of them very hurriedly written in the midst of great occupations, and while the “Tartars,” or messengers on horseback, were waiting for the packets and hurrying him to make them up.

We trust that the materials we have found and collected will throw a light on the history and character of the countries and times he lived in,—clearing up many obscurities, refuting false statements, and making manifest the change for the better that has taken place in the Turkish Empire, which we hope will be interesting to the public ; at the same time that

the warrant of his experience of the many facts, related in his own words, at the very moment, and evidently without any *arrière pensée*, gives a substantial guarantee for their truth, while they show him to have been an efficient, patriotic, and zealous public servant.

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SYRIA AND EGYPT UNDER THE LAST FIVE SULTANS.

CHAPTER I.

Mr. Barker's Early Life.—Becomes Secretary to the British Ambassador at Constantinople.—Audience of an Ambassador by the Sultan of Turkey at the beginning of this Century.—The Sultans Selim and Mustapha.—Mahmoud succeeds by a Bloody Revolution.—His Character.—He inaugurates Reforms.—Characters of his Sons Abd il Mejeed and Abd il Aziz.—Anecdotes.—The Sultan reads the Bible.—Hatti Shereef of Gulhaneh.—Aali Pacha and Fuad Pacha.—Parallel drawn between Old and New Turkey.—Hopeful Prospects.—Mr. Barker sent on a Mission to Aleppo as Proconsul.—Letters of Sir Spencer Smith, Sir Sidney Smith, and Mr. Tooke on Mr. Barker's Conduct of Public Affairs.—Appointed Agent for the East India Company.—Full Consul for the Levant Company in 1803.—Value attached to an Englishman's Word.—Trade of Aleppo at that time.

THE Civil officer to whose correspondence we are indebted for the facts recorded in these pages, John Barker, Esq., Levant Company's Consul-General at Aleppo, in North Syria, and afterwards His Majesty's Consul-General in Egypt, was the son of William Barker, who was

the youngest son of Thomas Barker, of "The Hall," near Bakewell in Derbyshire, lineal representative of an old county family. He, William Barker, like many of the younger sons of that time, went abroad to seek his fortune in Florida, where he purchased an estate. On the breaking out of the War of Independence, he was compelled to abandon the property he had acquired, leave America, and return to Europe, intending to go to India. He did not, however, carry out his project. Ill health compelled him to stay half-way, at Smyrna, where his son John was born on the 9th March, 1771, and was one of twelve sons. He was sent to England at a very early age, and put to school,—where, however, he did not make much progress; but at the age of fifteen his mind developed, and soon showed that his talents were of no ordinary kind.

At the age of eighteen, he entered the banking house of Peter Thellusson, the well-known millionaire of those days in Philpot Lane, and soon rose to be confidential clerk and cashier; and in this bank he acquired a knowledge, and habits of business, which became of the greatest use to

him afterwards ; for he was enabled to transact all the business of the Honourable East India Company and of the Honourable Levant Company.

He was not destined, however, to follow a financial or commercial career. His heart yearned for a wider field than a banking house for the exercise of the talents which he felt were in him ; and after some years of confinement in the bank he left London, in spite of the repeated attempts made by his employer to keep him with him. He went to Constantinople, where he soon attracted the notice of the Ambassador, His Excellency John Spencer Smith, who saw at a glance the superior abilities, intelligence, and activity, of which he was so much in need, and engaged him at once as private secretary.

Ambassadors and public men in those days had no electric telegraphs to fall back upon, and were therefore the more fully alive to the weight of the responsibility which lay upon them, and felt the necessity of having intelligent, honest, and zealous subordinate officers to carry out their instructions in conformity with the intentions of their Government.

While Mr. Barker was at Constantinople in the service of the Ambassador, he had an opportunity of being present at an audience given by the Sultan,—a matter settled by long negotiation; and it is curious to compare what was then in reality a humiliating ordeal to which one Ambassador after another submitted as a matter of course, with the present state of the relations between the Porte and the Representatives of the European Powers. A contemporary writer, or very nearly so, Dr. Griffiths (1805), mentions and animadverts on the indignities the representatives of crowned heads were subjected to, thus :—

“The haughty Sultan scarcely received them with the common usages of civility, and it is not very long since the representatives of majesty were compelled to leave their swords behind them, and return from the Presence backwards in the most humiliating posture, rather than offend the imperious monarch of the Crescent.”

Mr. Barker describes the interview in the following graphic manner. All the gentlemen attached to the Embassy, and in his suite,

accompanied the Ambassador on these occasions, which were extremely rare :—

“We were called up at six o’clock in the morning, put into a boat, and proceeded to the Seraglio Point, and landed at one of the landing-places of the public offices of the Porte. Here we were obliged to go up a most rickety staircase into a ‘Kiosque,’ or wooden large upper room, furnished, like all Turkish rooms, with low ‘divans’ spread on narrow mattresses on the floor nearly all round the room, with cushions behind them against the wainscoating. The curtains were of the meanest description,—a common cotton print, and very dirty ; indeed, they were ragged in some places. Here we were compelled to wait four hours and a half. At last, when the Ambassador’s patience seemed completely exhausted, one of the attendants (for we were surrounded by men in every variety of costume, all armed, as Turks always are, who smoked, chatted, and laughed together without seeming to take the least notice of us), volunteered to go and see if we might proceed, and after the lapse of nearly half an hour returned with the welcome intelligence that we might go.

"A bustle was then made, as if in haste to prevent our being waited for, and we were conducted down the same rickety railless staircase, at the great risk of breaking our necks. Passing through the immense area of the Court, we were conducted to a large door leading out of the Great Enclosure, and mounted on horses with Turkish saddles, magnificently caparisoned, and each attended by two grooms very handsomely dressed. A procession was then formed, though the distance we had to ride was not above a hundred yards; for we were only to go out of one gate or door, to come in at another. After this procession had advanced about thirty or forty yards, orders were given to stop, and we were at a loss to conceive what could be the cause of detaining us; but after about a quarter of an hour, or perhaps it may have been ten minutes, we saw coming from another direction the procession of the Grand Vizier, with about fifty or sixty attendants, all on horseback, who entered the Great Gate of the Palace, and then we were allowed to follow." On

dismounting we were shown into a common-looking but large apartment separated from the main body of the buildings, furnished very much like all rooms in Turkish palaces, or offices, where clerks write, and with 'divans' all round on the floor except just at the entrance. Here almost immediately after entering, a number of servants brought in large round metal trays, and a variety of dishes,—in fact, an ordinary Turkish dinner; having partaken of which with our fingers, and having washed our hands, we were called to the Audience Chamber. Passing from this apartment to the main building, and along a corridor with windows looking on the Court, we came, with a great deal of bustle and haste, to a small door about four feet high, which led into the great Reception Chamber. A fur pelisse, although in the middle of summer, was thrown over each of our shoulders,—the Ambassador's not differing from the rest; and we were seized by two tall guards, one on each side of us, and dragged along into the Sublime Presence by being compelled to stoop and pass through the small door, or portal, just mentioned. Our

swords were taken from us, and we were brought up as criminals would have been, to about twenty yards from the throne on which the Sultan Selim was sitting, with both hands resting on his thighs. The Grand Vizier was standing on one side, at a little distance, but between us and the Throne. His Sublimity did not move a muscle, but raising his eyebrows and eyelids with half-shut eyes very slowly, and turning his head a little on one side towards the Grand Vizier, enquired who was this infidel (*Ghiaour*). On being told that he was a slave sent by the King of England to solicit his favour (and at the same time the Grand Vizier took out of his bosom a long letter wrapped up in silk, which he had previously prepared, held it out in his hand, and said it was a letter the slave had been ordered to place at the foot of the throne), the Sultan, who appeared to be very drowsy, after a pause of a few seconds woke up, and turning again to the Vizier, very slowly asked if they had fed the dog, and clothed him; and on receiving a reply in the affirmative, said, ‘Very well, be it so.’

“As soon as he had said this, the attendants,

who held us firmly by the arms, hurried us *backwards* out of the room, and made us bob our heads down by pressing their hands on the back of them; and as soon as we had come out from the Sacred Presence, the pelisses were taken off, and our swords returned to us. We were then conducted back again, with the same ceremonies, to the old rickety ‘Kiosque;’ but we did not go up the stairs, for we found the boats below waiting to convey us home.

“I must not omit to mention that when we were standing before the Sultan there were two colossal negroes, one on each side of the throne, the tallest and the ugliest that could be found, making faces—that is, grimaces—at us, and scowling the whole time, and saying, loud enough to be heard, ‘Kish! kish!’—which means, ‘Drive them out! drive them out!’”

Several years after Mr. Barker had left Constantinople, Buonaparte sent Count Sebastiani, first as a spy, and afterwards as Ambassador to the Porte, who declared he would retain his sword, and would not have an audience on any other terms; and the point was ceded. When he came to the low door, instead of going in by

stooping forward he turned himself round and went in *backwards*,—which disturbed the gravity of the attendants and officers there, who could not help laughing at the manner in which he had turned the tables so cleverly upon them. Dr. Griffiths says it was Monsieur de Feriol who was the first to insist on retaining his sword; but he must have been wrongly informed. Mr. Barker assured us it was Count Sebastiani, and that he owed his success to the fear his master Buonaparte's name inspired.

Let us now draw the attention of our readers to the change which has taken place in Turkey since the beginning of this century.

Sultan Selim, whose name has just been mentioned as having conformed to the traditionary obloquy heaped upon the Ambassadors of European powers, had begun to feel the change in politics coming on; and when he was deposed and confined in the Seven Towers with his cousin Mahmoud, he instilled into the young prince's mind the necessity of reforms; which could only be effected by the destruction of the Janissaries, and which his cousin afterwards carried out when he ascended the throne, and when Selim

and his own brother Mustapha had been deposed and put to death.

Mahmoud was a man of very superior talents and courage, inclined to European progress, in harmony with the spirit of the age. He was the son of Sultan Abd il Hameed and of Mademoiselle du Lac de Rivery, the beautiful creole who had been sent to the Sultan as a present by the Dey of Algiers ; and no doubt he imbibed from his mother ideas and feelings more in unison with European civilization. She had been captured by pirates (on her way back to Martinique, from Nantes in France, where she had been educated), and sold for a large sum to the Dey of Algiers, who, struck by her extraordinary beauty and sprightly intelligent countenance, sent her to the Sultan Abdil Hameed,¹ and was thus the means of her becoming the favourite Sultana and the mother of Mahmoud. She was the cousin of the Empress Josephine, who was also of an ancient aristocratic family (Tascher de la Pagerie) of Martinique.

¹ The lovely captive was naturally inconsolable, and was only reconciled to her fate by the purchase of a piano from Paris.

Mahmoud was placed on the throne by a bloody revolution, in which his brother Mustapha was killed, and he himself received a gash across his forehead by a sabre cut, the scar of which he retained all his life ; nor would he have escaped his brother's fate had not one of the officers of the harem rushed forward and warded off the blow by interposing his body between the assailants and the young prince. This act of devotion and bravery allowed sufficient time to elapse for succour to come, and for him to be carried into the harem, where he was concealed in a roll of mats, and placed upright in a corner till the fighting was over.

There is an impression that Mahmoud was cruel, from the circumstance of his having caused the chiefs of the Janissaries to be put to death ; but no doubt the act, however horrible it may appear, was one desperately resolved upon in self-defence, and that if this Sultan had not adopted this resolution, and courageously carried it out, he would himself have been put to death like most of his predecessors ; nor would it have been possible for him to have introduced the adoption of the European military

system, become a necessity ; nor would his son, Abd il Mejeed, who succeeded him, have been able, six months after his father's death, to concede to his subjects the famous "Hatti Shereef of Gulhaneh,"—the first grant of liberal institutions to Turkey. The mild character of this Sultan inclined him to favour his Christian subjects ; so much so that he was called by the Mohammedans the "Christian Sultan."¹ Still, if the corps of Janissaries had been in existence, he could never have continued his father's reforms, nor have attempted any others.

Changes for the better were made during the reign of his successor and brother Abd il Aziz, the late Sultan, thanks to the enlightened policy of his Ministers, Aali Pacha and Fuad Pacha, who discovered a means of inducing him to come into their views by threatening to resign.² The death of these two eminent

¹ One day, his Minister, Rescheed Pacha, asked to be admitted to his presence, but was told he must wait until His Majesty had finished the chapter of the Bible he was reading.

² It happened, one day, that Abd il Aziz, after having been out on the water, was so pleased with the chief sailor (caï-eek-jee), that he sent word to Aali Pacha, then Grand Vizier, his "will" to create him "Pacha." The two Ministers came

Ministers was a great loss to him ; for soon after their death Turkish affairs sank into hopeless anarchy. The anecdotes related of this passionate, and at the same time timid and irresolute, monarch, would not find room in this work. Extremely superstitious, like most Orientals, he was a slave to “ill omens.”

One day coming into a room in his palace of Dolmabakchay, where some alterations were being made, his head touched a beam, and his fez, or red cap, fell off backwards, from his head. Aali Pacha was sent for immediately, and was told that “the Palace *must* be pulled down, in order to counteract the ill omen.” The Minister remonstrated, but to no effect ; and only prevailed when he observed, “Your Majesty, by this act, will indispose all Europe against you, and you will not obtain any more money in loans.”

His extraordinary avarice (the greatest defect

together to the Palace, and tendered their resignation,—which had the desired effect.

At another time, when Fuad Pacha had been compelled to disagree with His Majesty, he flew into a rage, and took to pommelling him with his fists, so that Fuad was glad to make a precipitate retreat.

an Oriental monarch *can* have) was foreseen and noted down by his father Mahmoud. One day, to discover the bent of the dispositions of his two sons Mejeed and Aziz, when children, he gave to each a purse containing five hundred piastres (about £4 10s.) in silver, on their going out to take an airing ; and on their return enquired how they had spent the money. The oldest, Mejeed, related how he had bought several things, and had distributed the remainder to objects of charity. “ And you, Aziz, how did you spend *your* money ? ” asked the father. “ Oh, I have it all here,”—slapping at the same time his pocket with his hand. “ Alas ! ” exclaimed Mahmoud, “ I foresee the misfortunes which will befall your subjects when you, my son, come to the throne ! ”

The tide of progress, however, could not be repressed. It was slowly but steadily coming on. Abd il Aziz, although so ignorant and perverse, was the first Sultan who dined with Ambassadors, went to balls, and finally visited Europe.

No greater proof of the immense step Turkey has made in civilization need be adduced than

the *fact* of the late revolution at Constantinople, and the deposition of the Sultan having been accomplished without bloodshed,—a pledge of assurance that a new order of things is about to dawn, and that the elements of wealth and prosperity, which abound in Turkey more than in many other countries, will be developed and fostered by the establishment of a regular Government. Nothing but the will is required. Former Mohammedan Governments, at a time when Europe was not advanced in civilization as it is now, have prospered when justice was the rule: why should they not now? The men who have brought about this revolution are the enlightened part of the population, the learned in the law. The new Sultan, Mourad V., has been carefully educated by his father, Abd il Mejeed, because he foresaw the necessity of his son's becoming adapted to—that is, in conformity with—the progress of the age. He is said to speak French fluently, and to be versed in European history and philosophy.

Some time after Mr. Barker's arrival at Constantinople, and his entry into the Ambassador's

service, circumstances occurred at Aleppo to render the appointment of an agent for the affairs of the East India Company, and at the same time for the transmission of correspondence between them and the British Government in England, very necessary. It also became necessary that the Levant Company should appoint a Consul to succeed the one late at Aleppo; but the forwarding of dispatches was of the greatest importance. Mr. Abbott, the Levant Company's Consul in that city, had died; and although his wife had transacted the public business for two years after his death very creditably, going herself to the Pacha whenever matters demanded her presence at the palace, and speaking to him in Turkish without an interpreter, still, somehow or another, affairs had got into confusion. The "Tartars," or messengers on horseback between Constantinople and Aleppo, and between Aleppo and Bussorah, no longer under strict control, were irregular in their arrivals and departures. The war with France, and the expedition of Buonaparte to Egypt, were tending to threaten our possessions in India, and the only route for communication was through Con-

stantinople, Aleppo, Bussorah, and Bagdad. Dispatches could not be sent along the Mediterranean, but through Germany to Constantinople.

At that time the East India Company had for political agent, or "Resident" as he was called, Harford Jones, Esq. (afterwards Sir Harford Jones); and at Bussorah, Samuel Manesty, Esq.

His Excellency the Ambassador recognised the valuable qualities of his Secretary, and decided on sending him, in this crisis, to Aleppo, as Proconsul, and agent *ad interim* for the affairs of the East India Company; which he did in the month of May, 1799, furnishing him with a patent, or "Exequatur;"¹ and the letters he subsequently wrote to him prove how well he had selected his man, and how satisfied he was with the good sense, tact, and zeal he displayed in this mission.

The letters from His Excellency Spencer Smith, from Admiral Sir Sidney Smith, his brother, and from Mr. Tooke, which we have before us, speak most eloquently of the high

¹ See Appendix for copy of "Exequatur," dated 4th April, 1799.

sense they, his immediate superior officers, entertained of his services, in the difficult task of supplying them with political information at a time when the war rendered communications very difficult, and which could not have been obtained without an indefatigable correspondence with native agents, and repeated transmission of duplicate, and even triplicate letters, in order to ensure the receipt of some of them.

The Ambassador writes to him on the 1st October, 1799 :—“I must not omit to tell you that I have received your letters up to No. 12, of the 26th ultimo, with their various enclosures ; the contents of all of which have proved as interesting as the attention and alacrity with which you have forwarded them is praiseworthy.”

Again, on the 10th November, 1799 :—“In the midst of all the hurry and bustle attendant upon the Embassy, I will not, however, suffer this occasion to slip without accompanying my brother’s [Sir Sidney Smith] packets by a few lines of recommendation, and the assurances of my constant remembrance and satisfaction at your public conduct and private

attentions ; both the one and the other merit, and shall receive, more suitable notice and acknowledgments.”

And again, on the 8th April, 1800 :—“ I tell you that I shall be seriously vexed and angry if you relax in any degree from the useful, comprehensive extent you have fallen into by your system of furnishing copies of your intercourse in other quarters, which is peculiarly adapted to my wishes, and I am glad to say highly advantageous to the opinion I am glad to entertain of you, which I believe to be such as you could desire. . . . In any case, you may be assured of the best reception from me,¹—a reception suitable to my opinion of the rectitude of your conduct and the way you have justified my confidence in your integrity and abilities : those abilities, aided by the technical experience you have acquired, can hardly fail to obtain essential encouragement and success.”

¹ The Ambassador fully reckoned on his Secretary returning to him, and wrote to him several times urging him to do so as soon as he should have fulfilled the object of his mission. Fortunately, he decided to remain at Aleppo ; for Mr. Smith was succeeded by Lord Elgin—a man with whom Mr. Barker could not have sympathised.

His brother, Sir Sidney Smith, writes in the same strain, from on board the *Tigre*, off Alexandria, 6th April, 1800 :—

“ I beg leave to thank you for the zeal and activity with which you have expedited my dispatches of the 9th February from off Cyprus ; and have now to request you will use the same exertions in forwarding the enclosed for India, after taking copies of them, as on the preceding occasion, to be forwarded northward [to Constantinople]. You may depend, Sir, that you will always find me ready to acknowledge your extraordinary activity for the good of the service, and I cannot give you a stronger proof of my confidence and approbation than by continuing to send my dispatches through you, which I know by experience to be the best channel.”

We will give only one more extract of the many before us, from letters Mr. Barker received at the time, which show how soon his character was appreciated. It is from Peter Tooke, Esq., the agent of the East India Company at Constantinople, and one of their oldest servants ; dated the 3rd September, 1799 :—

“ You perceive how much Mr. Manesty is

satisfied with you; and depend upon it, the Honourable Court will take notice of your zeal and activity. I have always judged that a man should endeavour to render himself necessary if he wished to meet with support. Men are liable to be guided so much by passion and caprice, that you can scarcely depend upon any one. You have taken a good course to become necessary and useful, and will soon be able to stand on your own legs. If I judge from what I have experienced myself, the Honourable Company is generous beyond extreme when they perceive they are well served."

I must not, however, omit a passage from a letter written by William Ramsay, Esq., Secretary to the Honourable the Court of Directors, dated London, 18th April, 1800:—

"I am directed by the Secret Committee to express to you their approbation of your conduct in the attentive and satisfactory manner in which you have conveyed to them and to the Presidencies in India information of the important events that are passing in Turkey and Egypt."

It was not long before Mr. Tooke's prophecy was fulfilled, for Mr. Barker was confirmed in

his post, and regularly appointed Agent for the East India Company. But as he was not one of the Company's "children," specially brought up for the Indian service, his appointment was always considered in the light of a temporary arrangement; which, however, lasted without interruption thirty-three years.

His appointment as full Consul for the Levant Company did not take place till the 18th November, 1803.¹

For nearly fifty years before Mr. Barker arrived at Aleppo, the trade with India had taken the route of the Cape of Good Hope, and little merchandise, except in jewels and pearls, came that way. Aleppo had been during more than two centuries the great mart and highway to India; and all the nations of Europe had mercantile establishments, which were then called, "factories," at Aleppo and at Alexandretta. The English factory at that time was composed of about eighty houses, or firms.

Many of the younger sons of the nobility and gentry had made large fortunes at Aleppo; but

¹ See Appendix for copy of "Berat," or "Firman," with its translation.

as soon as, or very shortly after, the trade with India took the Cape route, the "factory" was broken up, and the appointment of a Consul by the Levant and Indian Companies was more in regard to the business of the Company at Smyrna and at Constantinople, and for the transmission of correspondence to and from India, than for the extension of trade in Syria.

The traditions of British intercourse, however, still remained fresh in the minds of the natives. "Parola Inglese," or in Arabic "Kilmet-Inglee-zeeyay," was a byword still in common use; by which was meant the truthfulness of England's sons, and the respect and consideration Englishmen attached to the value of their pledged word. We have often heard natives of Aleppo disputing together, and the one who wished to get off his bargain saying to the other, "Do you take it for granted, or fancy that I gave you an Englishman's word?"

The internal trade of Aleppo, by which we mean the transmission of goods between Mesopotamia, Persia, and India, and the other towns of Syria, and even Cyprus and the Greek islands,

continued to pass through Aleppo; and very large caravans of three thousand camels at a time still pass twice or thrice a year, bringing *tombakee* (Persian tobacco for the houkah), spices, shawls, carpets, and Indian goods, which come by the Persian Gulf on their way to Damascus and the other towns of Syria; and Aleppo is the station where all these caravans rest, before the goods are distributed to the north, to Asia Minor and Armenia, and to the south, to Damascus and Egypt.

The European trade between England and India has taken the Suez Canal route; and even Bussorah and Bagdad receive goods from England *which have gone to Bombay*. Strange as this may appear, it is nevertheless true, and gives cause for reflection on the value of the goods which pass between our Indian possessions and Europe, and the consequent value of that trade in articles which can go such a circuitous route and pay their expenses; and the mind is naturally led to dwell on the riches which this trade will yield to England when it goes back to its *original route* by the Euphrates and by Aleppo, stimulated by a railway, when all obstacles which

distance can throw in its way are removed, and India brought face to face with us by the shortest possible route, one thousand miles shorter than any other.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Barker's Marriage.—His Wife's Family.—Letter to Mr. Keith on this Subject.—Attacks on Mr. Barker's Character.—Mutual Hatred of Eastern Religious Sects.—Imprisonment of French Subjects on a War with France.—Conspiracy of Durighello and Pilavoine against Mr. Barker.—Course of Justice in Turkey.—How Money was raised by Pachas at the beginning of this Century.—Letter to Sir Sidney Smith on this subject. Anecdote.—Mr. Barker's Views on the Capitulations.—The real Secret of Mohammedan Fanaticism.—Anecdote Illustrative.—Moral to be learnt for our Guidance in India.—What Foreign "Protection" in Turkish Countries really is.—Difference in Creed not the Cause of Revolts.

A STRIKING feature in Mr. Barker's character was his strict attention to duty. In a private letter to Mr. Keith, secretary to His Excellency Sir Sidney Smith, dated 16th May, 1800, he informed him that he received his letter at the moment that he was on the point of setting out for a day's excursion,—the only one he had allowed himself since his arrival at Aleppo, eleven months before; and although on the point of contracting marriage (he was then twenty-eight years of age), he could not allow the natural inclination to

pass his time in the society of the lady he loved to induce him to forget or neglect his duty. And yet he was of a bright, jovial disposition,¹ gay, very fond of dry humour, full of pleasant anecdote, affectionate, a general favourite, always ready to serve any one, and generous beyond anything which could be conceived. It was a proverb at Aleppo that “the English Consul would give away the whole world if he had it in his hand.”

His marriage with Miss Marianne Hays was celebrated on the 15th June, 1800. She was the only surviving child of David Hays, Esq., merchant and consul at Aleppo, and granddaughter of Thomas Vernon, Esq., a member of the family of the Vernons of Hilton Park. She had a jointure of ten thousand pounds, placed in the Bank of England by the trustees of her aunt Miss Amelia Hays’ will, Sir Charles Pole, Bart., and Samuel Bosanquet, Esq.; and as much in jewels and in landed property. Her mother, the eldest daughter of Thomas Vernon, Esq., who died at Bussorah on his

¹ Mr. Barker’s portrait, which forms a frontispiece to this work, gives an impression of harshness and severity which was very far from being his disposition.

way to India, married first David Hays, Esq., and in her second nuptials Robert Abbott, Esq., who succeeded Mr. Hays as Consul, and whose death in 1797 was the occasion of Mr. Barker being sent to Aleppo. She, his widow, carried on the consular business during two years with great spirit; but she was unequal to the press of public business which was developed by the war with Buonaparte.

Mrs. Barker's early life was marked by an event of a very unusual character. In Dr. Griffith's "Travels in Europe, Asia Minor, and Arabia," published in London and Edinburgh in 1805, she is described as a "peculiarly engaging child of between seven and eight years of age, of uncommon quickness of comprehension, and of most retentive memory. At the tender age of seven years she spoke fluently the Arab, Greek, French, Italian, and English languages." She accompanied her father and Dr. Griffith through the desert of Arabia, on their way to India; and she lost her father by death before they arrived at Bussorah. A very interesting account of their journey¹ will be found in the book above

¹ See Appendix A.

mentioned, chap. xxiv., pp. 346—392, which gives a graphic description of the desert as it was a hundred years ago, a thousand years ago, and will in all probability ever be.

In a letter to Mr. Keith, secretary to Sir Sidney Smith, who was afterwards drowned at Aboukir,¹ and was a dear friend of his, Mr. Barker writes :—

“ My friends congratulate me on the occasion, as having formed a gainful alliance,—and it is indeed on that score no bad thing; but if they were acquainted with the personal qualities of my wife, they would lose sight of pecuniary advantages, and extol my good fortune to have found a person at Aleppo who, for purity of manners, propriety of deportment, humility, knowledge of domestic economy, candour, and good sense, has not her equal in any country. It is rare to find all this united, and yet this I have found—and at Aleppo, too! While my heart is melting in the enjoyment of the pleasures that surround me, it gladly owns the hand

¹ He was a young man of great promise. In going on shore at Aboukir, which is an open roadstead, the boats were swamped, and he was drowned with about three hundred more.

[the Ambassador, Spencer Smith], after that of Providence, which has so generously led me to these ‘ways of pleasantness,’ and so nobly sustained me in the midst of the crowds of enemies that sometimes my own imprudence, and sometimes ‘*la jalousie*,’ raised against me. I hope and trust my honoured patron has not also wanted a ‘hand’ among his superiors, to effectually parry the dark and dastardly blows aimed at him by the nest of furred-caps¹ at Constantinople.”

In some of his letters at this period, Mr. Barker mentions the calumnious attacks of evil-disposed persons who endeavoured to ruin his credit with the Ambassador, and his

¹ Meaning the intrigues of the native interpreters, or Dragomans as they were called, attached to every embassy at Constantinople, who wore high caps covered with sable-fur called “*kalpak*;” notorious for taking bribes from foreign Powers to thwart their own Ambassadors, reveal their secrets, and counteract their influence. It has always been a matter of great surprise to all who know the East how any straightforward, honest Ambassador could have carried through any measure in accordance with the wishes of his Government, surrounded by such a set of corrupt agents, himself ignorant of the language, which must have thrown him completely into their hands. This was remedied when our Government began to educate youths for this service.

brother the Admiral, Sir Sidney Smith; but he does not consider he is entitled to complain, since “these distinguished persons were themselves the butts of most malevolent attacks and violent opposition from those interested in thwarting their views. It is quite impossible for public men to be free from inimical opponents; intrigues are set on foot to bring about the wished-for result—the overthrow of opponents. If this occurs frequently in civilized Europe, what must it be in the barbarous East, where conflicting religious interests prevail, and sects hate each other with a heartiness equalled only by the ignorance of each other’s tenets and ideas?”

The great mass of Greeks and Roman Catholics, Armenians, Syrians, Nestorians, Maronites, etc., know nothing of the dogmas which the learned in their respective sects fancy divide them from other creeds (for in reality there are no material differences); but this ignorance does not prevent their animosity to one another, which prevails to such a degree as to oppose burial in the same place. And the closer the resemblance of one creed

to another, the greater the hatred. Thus it happens that the two sects of Mussulmans, "Sunnees" and "Sheeahs," detest one another more than they do the Christians and even the Jews; for we have remarked that these last are frequently in greater social intercourse with Mohammedans than those of a different creed, and yet the Jews are proverbially said to be out of the pale of religious toleration in Turkey, and have from time immemorial maintained their security solely by large sums of money paid to officials. They found the Mohammedans more tolerant in Syria than the ignorant and barbarous monks in Spain, at the time when they were expelled from that country by the persecutions of the Inquisition, and took refuge in Barbary, Egypt, and Syria. All those now at Aleppo are descended from Spanish Israelites. In this city they found a resting-place for the soles of their feet, and obtained such a hold that at the time Mr. Barker came to Syria all the Consular Corps, except the French and English, were of that persuasion.

A little before his arrival at Aleppo, all the

French subjects, Consul and all, had been put into prison by the Governor, according to traditional usage, on pretence that they *might* hold communication of a political nature with their countrymen in France, but in reality on account of the deep-rooted custom which has seen the subjects of a foreign Power, and even the Ambassador, put into the Seven Towers as soon as war became inevitable between the Sultan and that nation.

These prisoners at Aleppo were gladly placed by the Pacha under the charge of the British Consul, in order to get rid of the trouble of looking after them ; representing that as England was acting together with Turkey against France, it was more reasonable, and better for the prisoners, that Europeans should attend to their wants. They were well treated, and were allowed everything except writing materials and their liberty. But a certain Venetian subject named Durighello, a young clerk in a mercantile house, instigated one of them, named Pilavoine, to complain against Mr. Barker,—hoping by that means to remove him from Aleppo, and obtain the Proconsulship for himself, through

the intrigues of the Dragomans at Constantinople.

Of course the most malicious calumnies were concocted and put forward; and although no one in the East pays the least attention to such things, Europeans who are freshly arrived might be induced to attach credit to them, and be influenced thereby. All those who are born in the East, and acquainted with Oriental customs and ideas, know that in a country which has for many centuries been governed despotically, *truth* is quite unknown ; and the public reason in this way—"If the allegation be true, money can always prevail to shield the delinquent ; and if untrue, as is generally the case, why then there is no need of thinking anything more about it." When disparaging things are said of any person, every one suspects an interested motive, and knowing the impossibility of arriving at truth in the East, gives the accused person the benefit of the doubt. In Syria it has frequently happened that a dispute has arisen between a Mussulman and a Christian or Jew, in regard to money transactions ; and the bystanders, who are always more numerous on the side

of the Crescent, jostle and hurry the weaker party to the Governor or to the Kadee (judge), and declare most solemnly and unanimously, with great vociferations, that they heard him (the Christian or Jew) curse the religion of Mohammed. This is a hackneyed phrase invariably adopted. The Kadee, or Governor, as the case may be, orders the accused to be imprisoned, and by this means disperses the angry crowd. He then sends for the friends or relations of the imprisoned man, and the matter is arranged by a fine between him and them,—no part of which goes into the pocket of the Mussulman who was probably the original cause of the dispute. If the Christian or Jew be under the “protection” of some European Power, the tables are frequently turned, and the Mussulman is put into prison and made to pay. Whether one or the other was right or wrong is never taken into consideration at all, because the distinction in the minds of Orientals, from centuries of despotism, is so faint that a great amount of confusion always exists.

Such cases are of the most frequent occurrence, and we have known them got up in

order to make persons who may have had disputes with Mussulmans, pay sums of money to the Kadee or Governor out of sheer spite ; and it is on this account that “protection,” of which we shall have to say more, was a peculiarly valuable boon, and well paid for.

After the signing of the capitulations, the state of those Ottoman subjects who served the Ambassador and his agents became *de facto* an immunity from the despotic extortions practised by the Governors and ruling classes, and called in the language of the Levant “*Avania*,” as no one else could be shielded from any such ; and it was a matter of common occurrence for the Porte—that is, the Grand Vizier—to give a document into the hands of a needy dependent of one of the Ministers, condemning a rich merchant or proprietor in one of the provincial towns to pay a certain sum of money on the pretext that he had been guilty of such or such a misdemeanour,—perhaps relating to some accusation made a year or two before, or even years before ; and to render the document efficient, and ensure the payment of the money, an

officer called “Moumbasheer” was sent with the *protégé*, to see that the money was paid, and to receive also for himself his own fees and expenses out of it.

These transactions, common enough at that time, will be better exemplified by the annexed copy of a private letter written by Mr. Barker to Admiral Sir Sidney Smith, and an extract from one he wrote to Mr. Keith, Secretary to His Excellency.

Private.

“ALEPPO, 25th Feb., 1800.

“DEAR SIR,—

“I had the honour to write to you yesterday, and to-day having received the annexed letter from Hanna Kubbay of Latakia, relating to the circumstances of an accusation evidently false, I have immediately afforded him the official assistance I deem he is entitled to from us, for the zeal and readiness which he has ever uniformly manifested to forward the national interests, or show his respect for the English individually. I enclose herewith a translated copy of a memorial,

which I have taken upon me to address to the Grand Vizier, under the persuasion that you will on your part grant Hanna Kubbay your intercession in his behalf, as soon as you are made acquainted with the transaction, which appears to be one of those ordinary honourable modes to which the Sublime Porte is reduced to have recourse, for the means of furnishing pay for their servants.

“The point here seems not to be to prove the falsity of the accusation—which, you know, with the Turks in such cases is an immaterial circumstance—but to relieve poor Kubbay from the fangs of the “Mouumbasheer”; for the object of the firman is clearly, not the recovery of the two chests in question, but merely to afford a dependent of the Vizier an opportunity of extorting money from a person who is indeed accused *ostensibly* of a great crime, but who, in fact, is guilty of no other than possessing a reputation of being rich. I have not presumed to touch that chord in my memorial to the Grand Vizier, which, as you will perceive from the annexed copy, is meant merely as preparatory of a

more weighty one, from yourself, and which I sincerely hope may have the desired effect. Hanna Kubbay having informed me that the term of the patent you gave him as victualling agent was expired, I granted him a temporary, provisional one for the same; of which I annex a copy for your information, and which I hope will meet your wishes and approbation, *dans les formes et dans le fait*.

“I have the honour to be,

“etc., etc., etc.

“John Keith, Esq.,

“etc., etc., etc.”

“ALEPPO, 25th Feb., 1800.

“MY DEAR KEITH,—

“I wrote you a long letter yesterday, which will probably reach you at the same time as this. I now make a dispatch to Sir Sidney on account of an affair into which Kubbay has fallen, and out of which I fear we shall not be able to draw him, without his ‘shedding some blood’: ¹ we may attest the innocence of Kubbay, but the rascal of a ‘Mouumbasheer’ must have his ‘kismet’

¹ Meaning paying some money.

[that is, his perquisites]. However, if Sir Sidney moves the business, I trust it will put the Mouumbasheer ‘in *consideration*,’ and diminish his pretensions,—which, it seems, is all Kubbay expects from our protection.”¹

In those days, putting a wealthy man to death and seizing all his property was an everyday occurrence, and therefore the “protection” granted, and availed of, by the persons in the service and pay of the Ambassadors and the Consular Corps, by right of the capitulations, was of great value. On the other hand, the persons who held this ægis over the subjects of the Porte were obliged to guarantee them from oppression, because they could not transact their principal’s business without this assistance; and if these people were liable to be seized, put into prison, or killed, that business would come to a standstill, or be very seriously affected, until some other persons could be found, in-

¹ It is evident from this extract that no hope was entertained by either the party accused or by Mr. Barker, of getting quite quit of the “Avania,” but merely diminishing the amount of the extortion.

structed in the customs of Europeans and their habits.

This state of things in the administration at Constantinople has long ceased to exist; and the English public, seeing a somewhat more regular Government, are led to believe the exactions of the several articles in the capitulations with the Porte, and their continued maintenance to this day, to be hard and unjust. But those who know the Turks and the Levant think differently; for as long as Mohammedans are Mohammedans, and their religion is in force, the stringent laws which the Koran and the Commentaries on it lay on Christians and Jews, must also be in force, or, at least, are always there to point to a precedent; and as soon as the strong arm of the Governors becomes relaxed, outbreaks follow immediately under the pretext of "*fanaticism*," as will be shown in several places in this work.

It is a very erroneous idea to imagine and believe that the ever-recurring outbreaks in Syria and Palestine against the Christians were instigated by "*religious fanaticism*."

When Ibraheem Pacha, the Egyptian, son of Meh'med Ali, was master of Syria, and had established a strong Government, no one heard of any fanaticism. One day, being in one of the baths at Aleppo, during the Egyptian occupation, we saw a naked santon or holy man, come in, who had rubbed his body all over with mud. The proprietor of the bath took a thick stick, and belaboured him well, saying, "Get out, you dirty rascal ! and don't dirty my bath. Go to the common sewers, and bathe there." Ibraheem Pacha had prohibited men walking about naked, and had ordered that these wretched persons, some of whom were really idiots, should be placed in asylums; and all those who were not so, but idlers, were drafted into his regiments at once. Now the bath-master would never have dared to act in the way he did under a weak Government, in fear of public prejudices.

The massacre of the Christians at Damascus and Mount Lebanon, in 1860, was altogether a political outbreak; and Fuad Pacha in reading the firman which ordered the execution of the officers who had got it up (Achmet Pacha,

etc.), treated it as such. It is true the war party, otherwise called the *fanatical* party at Constantinople, were at the bottom of the plot, which was meant to disgust the Christian European Powers so much by the massacre that they should dethrone the Sultan Abd il Mejeed, and put his brother, Abd il Aziz, the late Sultan, in his place,—hoping by this revolution to change the politics at that time in vogue at Constantinople, and to bring their party into power. But this would never have been attempted if the Sultan's Government had been a strong Government. The real cause of the "outbreak" was its weakness. The six thousand French troops sent to Syria overturned all their plans; and they reaped the punishment they deserved for this horrible act.

But, indeed, the killing of Christians and Jews does not excite in Mohammedans the horror it does in Europeans: almost every page of the Koran incites them to exterminate unbelievers;¹ and those who have been brought up from their infancy to look upon persons

¹ Meaning idolaters who have no *written* law.

who are not of their creed as something filthy and unclean, cannot be as much affected as those who have been trained in the principles of Christianity. This must be kept in mind in our relations with Mohammedans in India.

At the time Mr. Barker went to Aleppo, and for nearly two centuries before, it was customary that all Christian rajahs employed and “protected,” should pay a certain fixed sum, as fees to the Embassy; and on his arrival about £40 was paid by various “protected” persons to him, which he passed to the account of the Embassy, writing several letters at the same time, showing how small this sum had become by the depreciation of the piaster.¹ In process of time, “protection” became an abuse, and many were on the

¹ On this subject Mr. Barker says the dues paid by the “Bāratlees” were fourfold greater a century ago, owing to the depreciation in the value of the *piaster*, which originally was a pure silver piece of money, and which every succeeding Sultan made of less value by putting copper into the coin, till it became *all* copper; so that at last it became a nominal coin. 100 piasters in A.D. 1800 were worth £80. We learn also that if, in 1826, 10,000 piasters were to be paid at the same rate that the same sum was current in 1804, the amount would be 40,000 piasters.

books at the Embassy and at Aleppo who lived in distant provincial towns. When the Porte discovered this, the Grand Vizier was determined not to lose so good an opportunity of making money,—a rule without exception in matters of Turkish administration; therefore he sold the “protection” of the Porte; and all who paid for this privilege were exempted from “Avanias,” or irregular demands, and could not be put into prison, or “squeezed,” without the permission of the Grand Vizier; and this again was another opportunity for getting money out of them, but, of course, only into the coffers of the Grand Vizier at a reduced rate; this was a matter for negotiation, and settled amicably, to the satisfaction of both parties.

These individuals were called “Bäratlees,” as possessing a “Bärat,”—that is to say, an exception in their favour from being under the authority of the provincial Governors; and nearly all the well-to-do Christian merchants and proprietors were bearers of this document. Many preferred to be “protected” by the Porte, because they were more at

liberty, and their conduct was not scrutinised with the severity attendant on legal European supervision ; and they could always, by paying handsomely to the Porte, get out of any scrape or difficulty their conduct might involve them in,—which they could not do if under English or French protection. Other European powers did not look so closely ; and as for Russia, constant intrigues have ever characterised the conduct of their agents in the East.

In regard to the proposition that the cause of all disturbances, riots, and rebellions in the Levant proceed from difference of creed, or, as stated in Count Andrassy's famous Note, "from the close proximity of one sect to the other, and one in subjection to the other," we will prove further on, and from Mr. Barker's experience, that the population of Aleppo, composed of several creeds, lived in harmony with one another as long as the Government of the Janissaries dealt even-handed justice to all alike. It is the fault of the proud, ignorant, and grasping Turkish officials, who tyrannise over all, and the Christians in par-

ticular, that there exists a political inequality, favouring sometimes one creed, sometimes the other, as these officials happen to be *influenced*. Then it is that the “last feather breaks the camel’s back,” and the Christians, driven to despair, rise in revolt. The Mohammedans, who believe themselves to be a privileged nation, resent the claim of the Christians, who have been so long in subjection, to enfranchise themselves and obtain political rights; and wreak their vengeance on them by violence and wrong, in the hope of neutralising their efforts. If a *strong* and *just* Government held the reins, there would not be any “insurrection.”

We have shown in a former part of this chapter, from Mr. Barker’s experience and our own, that the seeming animosity evinced towards Christians (falsely called “fanaticism”) has never appeared when the Government has been able and willing to punish it. Frequently in Syria, when evil-disposed rabble have got up a cry against Christians in the hope of pillaging them, the Government, well aware of this intention, have instantly suppressed all

further movement by seizing the ringleaders and summarily inflicting condign punishment; and whenever the attempt has succeeded, it has been owing to the weakness or connivance of the persons in authority.

Here is an instance which came under our own observation. The rabble at Antioch have the reputation of being extremely uncivilised, uncouth, and what is generally termed “fanatical.” No European before Mr. Barker’s arrival had ever been allowed to ride through the town. It happened that when in 1850 there was a revolution at Aleppo against the Pacha, and the Christian quarter and churches were pillaged, it was feared the same scenes would be enacted at Antioch. But the *Mutzeleem*, or Governor of the town, though only a colonel in grade, without any military force except thirty or forty irregulars, on receipt of the news went immediately, armed, into the bazaars, summoned the Chiefs of the Trade of Tanners, the most numerous corporation, and declared to them that the Sultan had confided to him the lives and properties of all his subjects, and that he would cut off the

head, with his own hand, of any one who should dare to create a disturbance. "At this moment I am the Sultan here," said he, "and I have power of life and death."

While he was speaking, he saw in the street a Turk boy, about twelve years of age, strike a Jew boy. He ordered his attendants to seize him and take him away to prison. He went round himself during the night with the patrol, in every part of the town, and by these energetic measures prevented any disturbance.

It is more a spirit of pride in the ancient power of the Turkish nation rather than religious fanaticism which excites the populations in Turkey against the Christians, and their protectors the Europeans. They feel their present inferiority, and this galls them. Religious sentiment has little to do with this feeling; political rivalry and resentment, much.

In the case just cited of the revolution or revolt against the Pacha of Aleppo in 1850, this man was incapable and a coward; and the city owed its return to order to General Behm and the Hungarian refugees, who happened to be there.

We must not omit to say that the young man Durighello, mentioned as so violent an opponent to Mr. Barker, became in after years one of his greatest and staunchest friends,—which goes far to prove that the accusations trumped up against the Consul were false, and exemplifying the Oriental proverb that “to become a friend you must first become an enemy.” This gentleman in the course of time became the Spanish Consul at Aleppo, and a rich merchant.

CHAPTER III.

Recall of Sir Sidney Smith and Sir Spencer Smith.—Lord Elgin succeeds.—Letter on the Dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire Seventy-five Years ago, and on the Invasion of India by a Foreign Power.—Aleppo the Point for Transmission of Dispatches between England and Egypt.—Mr. Barker's Post-Office Agents.—Letter from the Marquis of Wellesley.—Suedeeyah, and not Alexandretta, then the landing-place for Travellers going to India.—Difficulty met with in transmitting Coins.—Depreciation of the Currency.—The Prestige of the British Name.—Entry of a Consul at Aleppo, and Reception by the Pacha.

ON the 12th of April, 1801, the cannons fired from the Castle at Aleppo announced the victory of the British troops in Egypt over the French; and shortly after, the death of Sir Ralph Abercrombie was reported. On the 1st of May Mr. Barker heard of the recall of Sir Sidney Smith, and that a pension of £1,000 a year had been voted to him by Parliament. His Excellency John Spencer Smith was replaced at the same time at Constantinople by Lord Elgin. On the 11th of May, 1801, he was informed by the Secretary of the East India Company, Wm. Ramsay,

Esq., in a letter dated the 20th of March, that the Court of Directors had presented him with a sum of £200, as a mark of their sense of his care and activity in forwarding dispatches to and from India, and in procuring early intelligence respecting the French in Egypt.

At this date, May 1801, Mr. Barker writes to a friend in England :—

“The dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire would be attended with great difficulties from the locality of the countries of its supposed invaders. In what would France find security for a free passage for her armies by land [to India], after the Russians were fairly possessed of Constantinople? and without such security for many years subsequent to their invasion, how could the French hope to succeed in their gigantic, not to say romantic, project of attacking our Indian possessions by land? What advantages would not the English possess over the French, in a contest for Syria, by the priority of possession that our Navy could furnish the means of obtaining, especially in a country so full of natural barriers that a

very little European industry would render it impregnable? Acre resisted 12,000 Frenchmen, when guarded by Turks, and two English ships' companies; and there are many points in Syria more easily defended than St. Jean d'Acre."

The same arguments hold good now after seventy-five years. If a hostile power becomes mistress of the Bosphorus, England's Navy could no doubt defend the Suez Canal, but would not be of the least use in Asia Minor and Persia, Mesopotamia and the shores of the Persian Gulf, Bushire and Bender Abbas, and even Kurrachee. All these places will become easy of access to a Power at Constantinople, and England will find the Suez Canal route, for her troops to India, very "slow" work indeed, should "complications" arise.

The only alternative lies in the Euphrates Valley route; and this is so well known to Russian diplomatists that all the newspapers in Russia have always systematically cried down this route; and we know that what appears in Russian prints can only be an echo of their Government policy.

However extraordinary it may appear, it is yet a fact that Aleppo was the point and route of communication between *England and Egypt* during the period of the war with France; Mr. Barker's voluminous correspondence, showing how indefatigable he was in keeping up the lines of communication with his agents at Cyprus and all along the coast of Syria, proves it beyond dispute. On the receipt of dispatches and letters, he had “Tartars,”¹ or horse messengers, always ready to forward them to Constantinople, and through Bussorah to India. From Constantinople, they were sent on to England over the Continent, through Germany, and *vice versa*. Much of the expense was borne by himself from his private purse; for though he had full authority from the East India Company to be liberal, there were many “items” connected with Arab agents which

¹ In Turkey the post is carried in leathern saddle-bags securely tied over horses and mules, confided to a horseman called “Tartar,” who rides on a horse, and drives them, and the postboys on them, before him, always at a trot. The horses are changed at every station, but the “Tartar” rides day and night till he arrives at his destination—generally seven or eight days.

could not figure in his accounts to the Directors.¹ The perusal of his letters at this time discloses the most ardent patriotic sentiments, and an earnest desire to see the triumph of the “righteous cause.” So precarious a post-office arrangement established by him, when steam was unknown, but which, however, answered the desired end, shows an extraordinary talent for administrative organisation ; and the thousands of letters he wrote in English, French, and Italian, to his agents, demonstrate an activity of mind and body very rarely to be met with in the East, where the heat of the country tends to paralyse the nervous system, and render neither fit for work, so that one involuntarily and insensibly subsides into the *dolce far niente* state.

The importance of his post at Aleppo, in regard to the transmission of dispatches between India and England, was fully recognised, as will be seen from the annexed copy of a letter he received on the 4th of August, 1801, from the

¹ If Mr. Barker had not “protected” these agents from Turkish oppression, they would not have “acted” for him ; for they were not in want of any pecuniary remuneration.

Marquis of Wellesley, then in India, dated Fort William, 7th March, 1801 :—

“ To JOHN BARKER, Esq., His Majesty’s Proconsul, and Agent for the Honourable the East India Company, at Aleppo,” etc., etc.

“ SIR,—

“ By dispatches from the Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas under date the 6th of October, 1800, I have received information of the intended co-operation of a considerable British force, under the command of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, with the Turkish army under the Grand Vizier, for the purpose of effecting the expulsion of the French from Egypt; and the same dispatches communicated to me His Majesty’s command to furnish a competent force to co-operate with the combined British and Turkish armies on the shores of the Red Sea.

“ The preparations which I had previously made having enabled me to comply with His Majesty’s requisition at an earlier period and to a greater extent than could otherwise have been expected, I have reason to hope that the force which I have appointed for that purpose

will reach the Red Sea before the close of this month. I have vested the chief command of this force in Major-General Baird, and I have appointed the Hon. Colonel Wellesley second in command.

“Under these circumstances it is of the utmost importance that every exertion should be employed for multiplying and improving the channels of communication between the British Government in India and Sir Ralph Abercrombie’s army, and also between that army and the force acting in the Red Sea. The route of Aleppo affords a secure though circuitous mode of communication. I therefore think it necessary to desire that you will direct your attention to the means of expediting the transmission of dispatches to and from the army under Sir Ralph Abercrombie’s command, and between that army and the force acting in the Red Sea, as well as between Aleppo and Bussorah; and that you will immediately carry into effect any arrangement which may appear to you calculated to promote that object.

“Upon this subject you will communicate

with the Resident at Bussorah, to whom I have given instructions for the same purpose.

“I have the honour to be, Sir,

“Your most obedient servant,

“WELLESLEY.

“*Fort William, 7th March, 1801.*”

He received at the same time dispatches from the Governor-General of India, addressed to Major-General Hutchinson, commanding in Egypt; which he forwarded, by a boat of the country, from Latakia to Cyprus; and he instructs his agent at Cyprus to freight another boat of the country if necessary, in order to ensure its quick transmission to Egypt. And by this opportunity he forwards to his agent letters and bills of exchange for the payment of his disbursements, endorsed by native merchants to his credit. Cyprus and Suedeeyah (the ancient Seleusia), at the mouth of the Orontes river, was the route generally adopted by travellers going to India. Alexandretta was seldom selected as the route to Aleppo, because the roads were unsafe, except for large caravans with goods; and Latakia, because the port is only large

enough for small craft, and also on account of the insecurity of the road. Suedeeyah and Antioch were generally preferred. Dr. Griffiths, Della Valle, and a host of travellers in the last two centuries, and the greater part of those who passed through Aleppo in Mr. Barker's time, chose that route.

In carrying out the instructions with which he was charged, Mr. Barker found great difficulty with regard to the transmission of funds to the different agents he employed, on account of the nature of the monetary medium in use. He had constantly occasion to notice in his letters the publication by the Government of the value of coins above the currency, which rendered the transmission of specie from one town of Syria to another very unsettled and perplexing, and occasioned loss and delay. For instance, the forced value at Aleppo of coins did not correspond with that at Latakia, where the Pachas, who were frequently in open rebellion to the Porte, would not accept the Porte's "publication." Then again, between Latakia and Tripoli the rival Pachas had an interest in "publishing" on their own account, and keeping the rate of

the currency in their favour. All this rendered monetary transactions extremely difficult and dilatory, independent of the great number of different sorts of coins and their fluctuating value.

Paper money has never been in circulation in Syria, at any period.

The Porte has been for a century past in the habit of trying to keep the value of coins to correspond with the depreciation in the intrinsic value of the coins themselves (by the introduction of more copper into the silver). Thus a silver coin which we now possess, struck 150 years ago, and current then for thirty "paras," contains as much silver as a dollar now worth thirty "piasters,"—this being the depreciation from the original value by 1,200 paras in 150 years; a ratio of forty to one.¹

This ruinous system was put an end to soon after the Crimean War, when the paper-money was called in, the coinage reformed, and the value of coins kept at a fixed rate. But in the provinces much trouble still attends the

¹ There are forty paras in one piaster.

circulation of old coins and their fluctuating value.¹

Independent of his own tact and *savoir faire*, by which he secured the goodwill of all Orientals, high and low, united to a firmness in case of need, a studied politeness, and an untiring desire and effort to be useful to all, he was indebted to the prestige which had attended for two centuries the British name, and more or less to all Europeans; for though the French and Russians had some influence at different times, Consuls of those Powers never attained at Aleppo the importance and consideration Mr. Barker enjoyed.

The entry of a Consul newly appointed to the post at Aleppo was an event considered of great importance, because it shadowed forth the influence with the local authorities of the new comer, and consequent facility of his being able to transact and carry on the business of the subjects of his nation with credit and

¹ In a letter of the 11th May, 1802, Mr. Barker says the Talleree, or Spanish dollar, was worth $8\frac{1}{4}$ piasters, and the Venetian sequin was worth $7\frac{1}{2}$ piasters. The dollar is now worth 30 piasters.

“smoothness.” Therefore, when the diplomatic relations between France and Turkey were resumed, and Monsieur de Corancès was sent on behalf of the French Republic, making his public entry on the 11th March, 1803, more than usual care was taken to make it as splendid and as public as possible, in order to efface the bad impressions made by the indignities offered to the French subjects at Aleppo on the declaration of war, by obtaining from the Government special distinguished marks of regard and consideration.

The registers were accordingly searched for precedent (which in Turkey has more force than law) of particular honours conferred by the Government of Aleppo on Consuls in times when commerce was at its summit of prosperity, when Europeans enjoyed the greatest credit; and it was found that half a century back the Pacha of Aleppo used to furnish on the occasion of a public entry of a Consul a guard of horse (five led horses), accompanied by certain officers of the State, who walk in the procession of a personage of the same rank as Pacha. A salute would be fired from the

Castle, and the Pacha would make presents to the Consul, which in general were a horse, a sword, a pelisse or fur mantle. The Consul, on the other hand, paid a certain sum to the Pacha's retainers on leaving the Palace, through the Dragoman. These presents were always of the most inferior quality that could be given.

CHAPTER IV.

What a Rebellious Pacha was.—Djezzar Pacha of Acre.—Rebellion not Disobedience to the Porte.—Remarkable Letter on the Continuance of Turkish “Discord,” and its Probable Future.—Mr. Barker’s Opinion on this Subject.—Old England the successful Champion of Liberty.—Politics in Syria.—The Mamelukes in Cairo.—How they regained their Power.—Ingratitude of Orientals.—Robbery of the Post Tartar.—Mr. Barker recovers the Property from the Turkmans.—His Manner of Conciliating their Goodwill.—Carpets Made and Dyed by Turkish Girls.—Liberality the Secret of Mr. Barker’s Influence.

AT this time, 18th October, 1802, some Turkish men - of - war had arrived at Cyprus, destined to operate against the rebel Pachas Abdallah Pacha of Damascus and Djezzar Pacha of Acre, who were besieging Mohammed Pacha Merack, in the town of Jaffa. Another man - of - war had arrived at Tripoli, and the commander had issued a proclamation forbidding any provisions being landed in any part of Palestine on pain of death. At the same time, on the death of Suleiman, Pacha of Bagdad, his “Kehya,” or Lieutenant, had seized the supreme power in that city, and

maintained his quasi-independence of the Porte for many years.¹

In those days, before regular troops existed in the Ottoman Empire, any petty chief who had money enough to pay a band of robbers, seized a town, and became independent of the Porte's authority. Once firmly established, it became then a matter of negotiation between his agents (generally rich Christian merchants at Constantinople) and the Porte what sum he should pay as tribute,—a compact very rarely scrupulously adhered to by either party. In general, the rebel Pacha, or Beylerbeg as sometimes called, had the advantage until he was assassinated by treachery, or deposed by some other lawless freebooter. Necessity, however, compelled these men to govern the country in some respects justly *as a rule*; and we find frequently the populations regretting them when afterwards they fell into the hands of the rapacious officers of the Porte.

¹ This was Ali Pacha, who maintained himself at Bagdad a great number of years, and became as famous as any of the Paçhas who rebelled against the Porte; but he always paid tribute.

On this subject Mr. Barker writes :—

“Djezzar, or Jezzar, Pacha himself cannot be said to be ‘in rebellion’ against the Porte. He acknowledges the supreme authority of the Sultan; he contributes largely to the maintenance of the State; but, like all the other Pachas of the Grand Seignor’s dominions, he selects one of the members of that motley assembly called ‘the Porte’ for his ‘protector,’ whose business it is, in consideration of regular remittances of money, stuffs, shawls, horses, jewels, etc., to carry him with impunity through any charge which may be brought against him, whether for extortions, breach of acknowledged privileges, contempt of the rights and immunities of Europeans, etc. Ignorance of this fact occasions the name of ‘rebellion’ to be so often misapplied to the disobedience of Pachas in every part of Turkey. If a total disregard of Imperial firmans be a sure token of rebellion, no Pacha is a greater rebel than the Governor of Aleppo at this moment. I have obtained during four years four special commands of the Porte for the recovery of 5,000 piasters, acknowledged by him to be due,

and the money is yet to be ‘recovered;’ yet there exists not a Governor in Turkey more absolutely in subjection to the will of the Sultan than this Pacha. The proof of his subordination is the immense sums of money which he daily sends to Constantinople. The expression ‘state of rebellion’ carries with it ideas of insecurity and popular disturbances; yet I can with truth aver that for half a century past there has not existed greater security and tranquillity than reigns throughout all Syria at the present moment [May, 1803].

“On a superficial view of the different springs of the Turkish Government, it appears all discord and confusion; but on a better acquaintance with the subject it will be found to contain *concordia discors*,—a harmony, arising out of discordant materials, that has impelled the crazy machine so many centuries, and will, in my humble opinion, if left to itself, jog it on some time longer.”

In a letter dated 10th June, 1803, he gives an account of the state of Turkey in regard to the future, remarkable for the lucidity of his *prevision*, which has been verified during

seventy-three years, and shows a clearness of intellect and a capacity for seizing the right side of so difficult a “question” not often met with. He says :—

“On the politics of this country there seems to me to be a clear opinion—namely, that the Ottoman Power is verging to rapid decay; and it is easy to foresee that the vices inherent in its Government are sapping the foundations of that frail fabric, and that at no very distant period it must crumble to its base. But here arises a question of more difficult solution—‘How much longer will the jealousy of the European Powers be a barrier to each other’s cupidity?’ This question involves in it so many others connected with the state of the ‘balance of power’ in Europe, that I confess myself utterly unable to hazard an opinion on the subject; but on the second question, namely, ‘How long is the Ottoman Power likely to endure, provided it receives no shot from external invasion?’ I will venture to offer my humble opinion that it will last our time, and with very little alteration except in the constant gradual impoverishment of its

subjects, which must induce a proportionate decline in its commerce and in the resources of its Government. It seems, however, to be a popular opinion that the latter ‘question’ is not likely to come to a fair decision,—that the Ottoman Empire will not be suffered to die a natural death; but since you pay me the compliment of asking my opinion in matters of such vast scope, I will say that I rather incline to believe the Turks are in no danger of falling by a Christian sword until some European Power shall have swallowed up all the rest.

“And now, not to be backward with you in queries of a like nature, I beg leave in return to entreat your private opinion of the probable issue of the present avowed efforts of France to this Universal Empire. Will each Continental Power in succession fall a prey to the ambition of Buonaparte, or his successor to that inordinate power which he has assumed; or shall old England prove at last the successful champion of the liberties of the world?

“In regard to the politics of Syria, what

can be said with which every one is not well acquainted? The whole country south of Aleppo is absolutely under the dominion of Djezzar. As to the Druzes, they are continually making ineffectual efforts against the power of the tyrant; and when it is considered how immoderate is that power, what advantage can be expected from an alliance with a people incapable of resisting it? I mention this in reference to your idea of the Druzes being likely, in case of a contest for Syria between the English and French, to lead victory to the side they may espouse. Depend upon it, the English or the French have only to present themselves in any part of Syria, however insignificant their force, to drive all opposition away before them, as a lion would disperse a pack of curs. Syria is as defenceless against European forces as it would be if all the inhabitants were yet in their swaddling-clothes.

“Indeed the Druzes cannot boast of any very genuine independence from the power of Djezzar; for they are indebted for the little liberty they possess more to the fastnesses of

their mountains than to their native force and resources."

About this time (1803), he writes:—

"The Mamelukes have regained possession of Cairo and all Egypt, except the seaport towns. The way in which that revolution was effected is as follows:—A Pacha had been sent by the Porte from Constantinople with 3,000 men under a commission of repairing to Mecca to stop the progress of the Wahabee arms in those parts. On his reaching Cairo, and finding that Mecca was already taken by them and lost to the Porte, and that Tahāre Pacha, at the head of the Arnaouts,¹ had usurped the Government of the country, he took upon himself the task of expelling the 'rebel,' with the view of restoring Mehmed Pacha to the authority delegated to him by the Porte. He succeeded in treacherously murdering Tahāre Pacha at a banquet; but the Arnaout troops, indignant at the assassination of their chief, flew to arms, and after contending with this new Governor for the sovereign authority of the city, called in the Mamelukes, who quickly forced him to

¹ Albanian soldiers from the Morea and Albania.

relinquish the contest and fly the country. Thus the Mamelukes regained possession of their ancient dominion after the many vicissitudes of fortune experienced by them since the invasion of Egypt by the French in 1798,—much, no doubt, to the joy of the inhabitants, who assuredly prefer the Mameluke government to either that of the ‘Grande Nation’ or that of the Sublime Porte.

“Alexandria is now the only place in which the authority of the Mameluke Beys is not re-established; and it is confidently believed that it cannot fail soon to fall under their dominion.”

In a letter to Vice-Admiral Lord Keith, Mr. Barker says:—“When the news arrived at Aleppo of the surrender and evacuation of Cairo by the French, in a dispatch sent from Egypt by the father of the Governor of Aleppo, the Turks took to themselves the merit of all that had been done in Egypt, and there was scarcely any mention of the gallant Britons who are saving at the price of their blood these scoundrels from perdition, more than if they had remained at Rhodes.

I am convinced that whoever lives to see the time, will see the Porte (if Great Britain bears her on her eagle's wings through the present storm) forming stronger and closer connections with France than ever; their predilection for them breaks through the flimsy veil which covers their sentiments and actions."

In regard to the insecurity of the roads between Constantinople and Aleppo he writes:—"The rumour which you say has been spread at your capital, that one of my Tartars was robbed, is not vague. One of them has been robbed, but not the one by whom you sent me the watches, as you will have afterwards seen by my last letter, in which I acknowledge the receipt of them. The last Tartar from our city has had the misfortune to be robbed; but having written to the chief of the Turkmans, who has great influence over those who stripped my Tartar, he caused them to give back everything they had taken from him; and I am expecting every moment the arrival of these effects, among which are the flasks and shot-

belt you sent me. The public dispatches are, however, uniformly respected."

In order to be ready for such an emergency, Mr. Barker took opportunities of going to shoot and to fish, from time to time, for a few days in the districts inhabited by the Turkmans; and by little presents of sugar, coffee, etc., and by receiving them hospitably in his house at Aleppo whenever their business took them to the city, he obtained a certain degree of influence with their chiefs. In return, he sometimes received small carpets;¹ but of course the advantage was always on their side,—as is generally the case in the East, where the "great man" always "pays the piper." He frequently had occasion to need their services. Even Kutchuk Ali, the notorious Turkman rebel at Payass, between Alexandretta and that small port, who had defied the Ottoman Power a great many years, and had put the Dutch Consul

¹ All the carpets are spun, woven, and dyed by the Turkman girls before their marriage. They begin very young to learn to spin and weave, and the different herbs used in dyeing. Since cochineal has been introduced from Europe, the dye is not so good.

of Aleppo in prison and kept him there six months till he had paid a large ransom, had a great idea of British influence and power, and more than once returned Mr. Barker sums of money he had extorted from travellers passing through his usurped territory.

Mr. Barker's position at Aleppo entailed upon him much expense which he was compelled to defray; and although the East India Company, in June, 1804, fixed his salary at £1200 per annum, the Company's Committee would not allow him to profit by the difference in the Exchanges between Aleppo and Constantinople, and at the end of a year he found a deficit. In speaking of his predecessor, Mr. Abbott, he says that, although the Levant Company's Consul, he lived, as a private person, as economically as possible, unable to bear the great expenses attendant on a public character, and that he found himself also in much the same predicament, because the Levant Company would no longer pay a salary (as the decline of trade had diminished their fees) to the Consul, but only a sort of gratuity for the Consul's *trouble*.

in forwarding their packets. And yet Mr. Barker was compelled to maintain a character that the Turks had been accustomed during two centuries to see sustained with state and liberal profusion. Mr. Abbott was frequently, nay, almost constantly, obliged to detain the Company's packets from the actual want of the money necessary to defray the expenses. But Mr. Barker, impelled by zeal for the interest of the public and for the credit of the British name in Syria, in emulation of his patrons, His Excellency Spencer Smith and Sir Sidney Smith, was induced to live, not according to the real income afforded by the emoluments of his office, but to that which he conceived to be consistent with the character of a British agent of his Government in Turkey.

CHAPTER V.

Revolt at Aleppo against Mohammed Pacha.—Siege of the City.—Quarrels between the Janissaries and the Shereefs.—Anecdote of the Eight Years' War.—Difference between the Arab Race and the Turkish Race.—Anecdote of Turkman Petty Theft.—Aali Aga ibn Roostam.—His Extortions and Atrocities. His End, and that of Two other Rebels.—Mr. Barker Introduces Vaccination into Syria.—His Efforts and Success.—The Aleppo Button.—Mr. Barker's Patriotic Feelings in regard to Buonaparte's Career.—Final Adoption of the Aleppo Route for Mails to India.—Sultan Selim's Medal.

ON the 30th of June, 1814, a revolution, or revolt, took place at Aleppo, of the people against Mohammed Pacha, who was driven out of the city on the 5th of July, and was obliged to repair to a small fort in the vicinity, called Shaykh Yebrak. He continued to besiege the city, and demanded 900 purses, each purse containing 500 piasters, and the possession of the Castle; on which condition alone he would consent to disband his troops; and on the 11th of October he was still besieging, and the city suffering from a scarcity of provisions and stagnation of business. The

people of the villages around Aleppo were all in arms, fearing some of the Pacha's men might come and surprise them. The Porte sent an officer with the title of "Defterdar" to endeavour to reconcile the two belligerent parties. "The Pacha's position was also critical. He had pledged himself to the Porte for a large sum, which he could in no ways raise except by becoming master of the city. He could find barley and "burghul" to feed his horses and his men, by pillaging the villages, sufficient to enable him to continue the contest many months longer; but he could not procure money to pay his troops, who having no hope of receiving the arrears of pay due to them, wished to bring about an accommodation with the people and their leaders. Most of the Pacha's troops were Albanians,—a mongrel set of vagabonds from the Morea, half Greek, half Turk, who have overrun Syria since the troubles in Egypt, who have no ties in the country, who are under little discipline, and who would become masters of it if they had any one among them sufficiently enlightened¹ to take the lead."

¹ Such a man was found in Meh'met Ali, Pacha of Egypt.

The Pacha ultimately returned to Aleppo on the 1st of November, 1814; and on the 13th of December, 1814, Mr. Barker writes:—“*Mohammed Pacha* is in possession of none of the attributes of a Governor, but the name only; and the people of Aleppo would rarely recollect that such a being exists among them, were they not reminded of the fact by his musical band, which plays prettily twice a day. His ‘*Tfenghchee Bashee*’ [chief of police] and ‘*Auda Bashee*’ [a sort of bailiff], who are now either Janissaries or Shereefs, keep for themselves whatever they can extort in those capacities.”

It is necessary to keep in mind the fact that the Janissaries and the Shereefs were the two contending factions—the Guelphs and Ghibellines—of Aleppo, who were always at the bottom of all revolutions, according as their private interests impelled them to this party or to that. The struggle between these two factions continued for eight years without any very striking result. Like the quarrels of the patricians and plebeians of Rome, first one party had the advantage, and then the other.

The Pachas delegated by the Porte became cyphers in their hands, to such an extent that more than once the supposed Governor of the city had not the wherewithal to procure dinner for himself and his servants, and was indebted to Mr. Barker and his friend Mr. Maseyk, the Dutch Consul, for his meals, which were regularly sent to him out of sheer compassion.

In the meantime open war was waged between the two factions, the Janissaries and the Shereefs, who inhabited different quarters of the city; but without any very serious intention of doing each other any harm. Very rarely a “casualty” occurred, and then only by accident; a great deal of firing off of guns was frequently heard, and much powder consumed in bravado, but few were ever wounded.

An amusing anecdote is told of this “eight years’ war;” and those who know the character of the Aleppo population will easily believe it.

The firing had begun earlier than usual one morning, and the people on the terraces of a house cried out to those below in the street,

“Yahoo! Hallo, there! What a hurry you are in! Won’t you let us drink a cup of coffee before we begin?”

The Arab race, by which Aleppo is principally inhabited, and who speak the Arabic language, is altogether different from the Turkish or Ottoman race, now become “Osmanlee” (by which name they are now distinguished in Syria); and one of its distinguishing features is *humanity*, proceeding from the high state of civilization to which the Arab Khaleefs of Bagdad and of Cairo had attained, at a time when all Europe was buried in the barbarism of the Dark Ages; and the recollection of those halcyon days of the *just* government, and the poetry which tradition has handed down, have *humanized* the present race of Syrians of the town, and the Arabs of the desert, who have a horror of shedding blood. No instance is known of Bedouin Arabs murdering any one in cold blood; they “strip” and pillage the caravans of those they meet in the desert, who are not brothers¹ with them; but never wound nor kill except in self-defence.

¹ This term “brothers” implies those who have partaken

The “Osmanlee,” or civilized portion of the Turkish races who inhabit Constantinople, Roumelia, Bulgaria, and the north of Asia Minor, are very different from the Arab race, inasmuch as they never have had, like the latter, a literature and poetry to polish them; and tradition in that respect has not done anything for them. The great body of the people are, however, honest, industrious, and hospitable. If they had a good Government, all would be well. Indeed, it is a subject of wonder that, under such training and direction as they have had for the last century, they should be as good as they are. European travellers who have visited the provinces of Turkey, declare that they have uniformly met with civility, kindness, and hospitality; and very frequently this hospitality has been tendered with alacrity, the villagers vieing with one another in receiving the stranger, and all remuneration being refused. In general, the “Osmanlee” Turk is more truthful than the

of bread and salt with them, and are consequently under their protection, bound to them by the *inviolable* and sacred bond of brotherhood.

Christian rayah, and pilfering secretly is considered by him a great disgrace.

It must be borne in mind that the Ottoman Empire is peopled by widely different races; the “Osmanlee” Turks are the descendants of the original companions of Mohammed II., who a little more than 400 years ago took Constantinople: they must be distinguished from the Turkmans of Asia Minor and North Syria. These last are not, in civilization, at all above their brethren of Khiva and Bokhara, and are nomadic, and incorrigible thieves and robbers. Stealing is considered by them to be honourable and praiseworthy. A Greek Christian pedlar of Antioch, who had gone among one of their tribes, who had come into the neighbourhood of the Great Plain there, to sell Manchester goods to them, perceived that a lad had surreptitiously drawn away a piece of chintz print, and was making off with it under his cloak. He rose, intending to follow him, when the father of the lad prevented him, saying, “Sit down, I will pay you the value. It is my son’s first attempt, and I would be sorry that he should receive a check.”

The two contending parties at Aleppo fought in the streets without much damage to either party. Business, commerce, amusements, went on just as usual, and the European residents and merchants were never molested. Indeed, Mr. Barker frequently in his letters avers that the people were far happier under the rule of the Janissaries and Shereefs, who dealt even-handed justice to all indiscriminately; and who, having local interests in common with the townspeople, refrained from tyrannising and harsh measures, than under the rapacious Osmanlee Pachas sent from Constantinople to govern the provinces, who had no such interests.

Some months before this time, a certain Ali Aga Ibn Roostam, who had obtained possession of the town of Gisser Shogre by murdering his two cousins, contrived to collect a few hundred Arnaouts—lawless, irregular troops—and took the town of Latakia, put the new Governor of the Porte in chains, and set up the former one in his place. But perceiving soon after that nothing could be got out of a Turkish incarcerated “Mootsellim,” or Governor, who had only

been ten days in the enjoyment of the emoluments of his post, he released the imprisoned Governor, and turning the tables on the other, who had invited him to come to his assistance, threw him into prison, and "requisitioned" him in the sum of one hundred purses (fifty thousand piasters); but the most excruciating torments extorted from him only forty purses—probably all he possessed. He then proceeded to levy contributions on the town of Latakia, which he desired to fix at fifteen hundred purses; but finding it impossible for the inhabitants to raise so large a sum, he reduced the amount to five hundred purses. When this sum had been collected and laid at his feet, it had no other effect than that of increasing his avidity; and his troops proceeded to pillage the houses, torture, and commit every kind of atrocity. He quartered six men at the house of each of the Europeans in the town, whose business was to intimidate, by brutal usage and by repeated threats of murder, the masters of the houses in which they were lodged, and thereby extort money from them. By these means Mr. Ducci, the British Consular Agent,

was compelled to pay fifteen hundred piasters ; and Mr. Geofroy, at that time the chief of the French colony, and French Consul, was compelled to disburse eleven thousand piasters,—but not before he had had two or three cats put into his large loose trousers. A part of this money they were obliged to borrow, at a high rate of interest.

He then picked a quarrel with the good Governor of Antioch, Jiomalik Bakeer-Aga, and went against that town ; but he failed in that expedition, and avenged himself by pillaging the caravan of pilgrims going to Mecca, who happened to be encamped before Antioch, and obtained a considerable booty by “avanizing”¹ them. He then went down to the coast, pillaged Suedeeah, the ancient “Seleucia,” and the surrounding villages ; but a respectable chief of the Ansairee race, called Mokadim Adra, collecting together a large party of armed villagers of the same nation, who inhabit all that coast, defeated him, and carried him in chains to Latakia, where he

¹ “Avania” is a term well known in the Levant to mean extorting money ; from which the verb to “avanize.”

suffered the penalty due to his crimes at the end of 1804. At the same time Djezzar and Kootchuk Ali Ogloo also died; and thus the Porte got rid in one year of three of its noted rebels, or outlaws. But the disorder was too inveterate to be cured, for other "Dereebegs," or "Beylerbegs" (rebels), sprang up in other quarters of the Empire.

The above will serve to give an idea of the general state of things before the time when Sultan Mahmoud and Mehemet Ali Pacha, of Egypt, established regular government by the instruction of soldiers in European tactics, called "Nizam," and before the massacre of the Janissaries and Mamelukes,—a dire necessity; when the Porte recovered and maintained its authority everywhere in the plains, but not on the mountainous districts; as, for instance, Lebanon, and the mountains above Tripoli, inhabited by the Ansairee, which even Ibraheem Pacha, the Egyptian, could not subdue. But I am anticipating.

Relations of insurrections resemble each other so much that one's mind can hardly discriminate and remember the details. Some

Dereebegs were just, and were much regretted at their deaths,—like Jiowalik Bakeer Aga of Antioch; others, horrible monsters of cruelty,—like Djezzar, Abdallah Pacha of Acre, Emeer Besheer, Defterdar Bey of Cairo, etc.

In 1803, Mr. Barker introduced vaccination into Syria; but he made at first very little progress, and for more than two years his efforts were confined to converting persons immediately around him. He could not overcome the prejudices of the Mohammedan population. This is what he says in a letter dated 29th May, 1806 :—

“ Hitherto, as is natural, the greater part of the parents of the children vaccinated have required every art of persuasion to induce them to make a trial; and I am sure I never could have succeeded had I not had children of my own to vaccinate. What I consider as having principally induced our success, is, first, the extraordinary malignity of the small-pox this year in Aleppo, and, secondly, a subscription which I have opened for a fund to serve as a remuneration for the services of two medical men employed in vaccinating

gratis,—added to the eulogies pronounced in favour of the practice from the pulpit by the Bishops of all the Christian sects here."

This could never have taken place without great exertions on his part; for the Bishops were as ignorant as, and more difficult to persuade than, their flocks, in any matter out of their routine.

"Besides which," he continues to say, "owing, doubtless, more to good fortune than to our skill, not one accident of any kind has happened to discredit the cow-pox vaccine. Two anomalous cases have indeed occurred which might have alarmed the people of the country; but, luckily also, they both happened in European families. The subjects were both boys of six or seven years of age, and the symptoms were precisely alike in each case. About the seventh day the fever increased to an alarming height, and the whole body was covered with large red spots, called by the Venetian doctor *petechie*; but the violence of these symptoms continued but three days, and entirely subsided without medical aid. You will be surprised to hear that, although

we scarcely ever vaccinate from arm to arm, and usually make only one incision, not more than *one in twenty operations* fail. You must excuse me if I speak in the plural number, and rank myself among the Faculty, as our practitioners are so extremely ignorant of their profession, and, what is the natural consequence of their ignorance, so extremely obstinate, and tenacious of their own erroneous notions, that I have been obliged to follow them step by step, and have taken more pains than you will imagine to make them fulfil implicitly your instructions, and abandon their own ‘improvements.’ I shall engage Mr. Barbiani, and another person or two, to carry the virus to most of the principal towns of Syria and Mesopotamia; and as those practitioners will have the great advantage of being furnished with attestations from all the Bishops and all the European agents here, of the number of children preserved from the smallpox by the vaccine at Aleppo during the existence of a most violent and active epidemic, there can be no doubt that wherever they may present themselves, all the Christian and Jew inhabitants

will readily adopt the practice ; nay, I am even so sanguine in my hopes of the general diffusion of the vaccine in Syria, that I make no doubt the Turks themselves will, in the course of a few years, adopt it. Hitherto, two Mohammedan children have been vaccinated here, but they both belonged to persons in my service. I must not omit to inform you that several children have had a regular cow-pock, on whose faces I perceived the peculiar scar called the "Aleppo evil," or 'Aleppo button' (French, *Mal d'Alep*), which of course you have never seen, but with the name of which you are doubtless acquainted. Doctor Russell, in his 'Natural History of Aleppo,' gives a good description of this extraordinary boil ; let me recommend you to refer to that excellent work."¹

The successes of Napoleon Buonaparte threw consternation among the Europeans at Aleppo,

¹ The "Aleppo button" is not confined exclusively to Aleppo, but extends to all Mesopotamia, Aintab, Marash, and all the country as far as Bussorah. It is now generally supposed to proceed from the sting of a peculiar species of mosquito, only found in that district, and can be avoided by sleeping under a mosquito net. At Antioch, and along the coast, the "button" is not known.

particularly when the Republic of Ragusa was overthrown, because most of the merchants at Aleppo expected to get protection under this flag. On the 13th February, 1807, Mr. Barker writes :—

“If, therefore, my view of the subject be correct, our neutrality depends on the success of the Russians in keeping the French armies out of the Grand Seignor’s dominions, which I should hope they may be able some time to do, provided a part of the French ‘Grande Armée’ under Buonaparte is not detached to Moldavia to take the Russians in the rear; and that depends upon another battle, which must have been fought between the Prussians and the French soon after the disastrous affair at Jena.

“But be the fortune of the Allies what it may, I am most happy to perceive, from the English newspapers, and particularly from a letter addressed to me by a friend, that the general feeling in England is that our safety can only be found in the generous resolutions of all ranks of people to support with cheerfulness the burdens necessary for a vigorous prosecution of the war. For myself, I declare, and not without

mature reflection, that I look upon the Englishman who can in the present crisis utter a wish for peace *upon any terms* with Buonaparte, as a traitor to his country ! Nay, so strongly am I impressed with the importance of unanimity in that sentiment, that were I admitted into the counsels of the King, I would advise His Majesty to adopt a bold and decisive measure ; for nothing but a grand and most arduous scheme of warfare can counteract the designs and resist the attacks of an enemy like Buonaparte. Now the practical utility that I would draw from a solemn declaration in the face of all Europe by the King, Lords, and Commons, is, that it would strike with dismay all those nations who are groaning under the weight of contributions raised to support the French arms, and who are suffering from our oppression of their commerce, in a certain degree, and who endure their present ills only by the hope that the next victory of Buonaparte will appal the British Government, and induce it to sue for peace from the conqueror. Whereas, by showing the French nation and its allies that they never can attain to the object of their

hopes but through the conquest of Great Britain, a feeling of despair would be excited in the minds and breasts of these nations under the yoke of Buonaparte, that might produce effects in annihilating the power of a tyrant which it seems vain to expect from conflicts with his veteran armies."

This seems almost prophetic. Not long ago we heard a lecturer at the Institution maintain that this uprising of the nations was the real cause of Napoleon's downfall, and that this awakening of national spirit was the most substantial benefit which Europe derived from the Revolution.

"Far be it from me to presume that in this plan I have not overlooked many important consequences ; and perhaps a single objection which has escaped my penetration may destroy the frail fabric ; but *this I know* and *this I feel*, that the thought, be it chimerical, or be it founded in right reason, is a spark struck out by the collision of sentiments of the most ardent love for my country."¹

¹ This passage and others in his letters lead to the remark that expatriation in noble natures draws the chords which

For a long while since 1802, the Agent for the East India Company at Constantinople, Peter Tooke, Esq., one of their oldest servants, had been writing to the Court of Directors to engage them to give up the Aleppo route for the transmission of their packets to India, and avail themselves of the one through Bagdad by the Tigris. Mr. Barker, on the other side, reported that his experience led him to be assured that the Aleppo route through Bussorah was “safer, quicker, and cheaper.” I cannot give the arguments used by Mr. Tooke, not having them; but the East India Company finally adopted the route through Aleppo and Bussorah, after two years and several months’ mature reflection, and Mr. Barker was confirmed in his appointment, and his salary increased. On this occasion, he writes to Stephen Maltass, Esq., the Ambassador’s private bind the heart of man to his country tighter: for, as Moore says,

“Absence makes the heart grow fonder;”
or, as an ancient poet has it,

“Cœlum non animum, mutant qui trans mare currunt.”
Fifty years’ residence in Syria could not change his nature or feelings. John Bull he ever remained; continually reverting with delight, and relating scenes of his childhood and youth when at Bakewell, in Derbyshire.

secretary, a letter from which I transcribe the following paragraph :—

“ ALEPPO, 12th June, 1804.

“ I am glad you approve of my letter to Tooke of the 28th February, and trust my rejoinder to his answer will also meet with your approbation. I am certain, from the tone of the old gentleman’s rhapsody, that he was while writing it thoroughly persuaded of his having completely ‘*done my business for me,*’ and must be astonished when he perceives from my rejoinder that the prey which he thought lifeless suddenly makes so vigorous a defence as is contained in my last letter to him. If he should not be apprised of my new appointment, you would do well to conceal the knowledge of it from him for a time, in order more effectually to banter him on the subject: you may at first feign to be under the most serious apprehensions of my being able to sustain so terrible a battering-ram as his most potent attack; endeavour to engage him to relax into mercy ‘for a poor young man who has an increasing young family,’ etc.; and when finally you find him inexorable, tell him that as there is no hope of your succeeding in procuring me

the advantage of a reconciliation between us, you must even counsel me to endeavour to console myself as well as I can for that misfortune with my new appointment from the Honourable the East India Company."

At the close of the war with France, the Porte, sensible of the assistance Sir Sidney Smith had received from Mr. Barker by the transmission of dispatches, and by co-operation with him in other ways during the memorable siege of Acre, and its defence by Sir Sidney Smith, presented Mr. Barker a diamond snuff-box, and a very large gold medal called "Seleemee." Very few of these medals were struck, rarely more than twenty, with the sign-manual of the Sultan, called the "Turrah," and an appropriate inscription, and the die was then destroyed, that no more might be struck; and this enhanced the value of the distinction which was conferred on Mr. Barker.

CHAPTER VI.

War with England.—Mr. Barker's Flight to the Mountains of the Druses.—He escapes from Latakia.—Takes refuge with the Prince Emeer Besheer.—Arrival at the Monastery of Harissa.—The Reverend Father Salvadore.—Account of his Escape written to Mr. Hamilton.—Anecdote of the Little Saint Anthony and the Great Saint Anthony.—His Refusal to “doff his Hat.”—Russian Peasants and French Saints.—Continues in Lebanon to transmit News to India.—His Earnestness in this respect.—Sends his Dragoman with Dispatches to Egypt.

IN February, 1807, Mr. Barker heard that a rupture between England and the Porte was imminent, at the instigation of Russia; and he decided on sending his wife, who was far advanced in pregnancy, and his two children to the Mountains of the Druses, preparatory to his joining them in case political affairs took the turn he expected. He says: “As for myself, I am resolved not to quit my post till the last moment, and you need be under no apprehension on my account. I should not be alarmed for my own safety and escape, if I at this moment heard that a ‘firman’ had arrived at Aleppo for

my arrest. I have, thank God, health, youth, and a good pair of legs."

He was, however, reckoning without his host. The Porte had already sent a "firman," and the precautions he had taken to send away his family, accompanied by Nahoom Hassoun; one of his confidential interpreters, was not taken a moment too early.

Mr. Barker himself was soon obliged to fly in all haste to Latakia, leaving all the public records and all his private affairs in the charge of Mr. Raphael di Picciotto, Austrian Consul-General.

He had gained the esteem and friendship of this gentleman, who lent him money for this sudden emergency, and assisted him in every way he could think available. The Pacha of Aleppo at that time, and the Chiefs of the Janissaries who *de facto* ruled, were also well disposed towards him, and winked at his getting away out of the clutches of the French, who were beginning to look forward to his arrest and confinement. The great difficulty was at Latakia ; but there the French Consul *secretly* favoured his escape, while appearing to be a violent op-

ponent, and press the Governor to put him into prison.

He was detained at Latakia eight days on thorns, as may well be imagined, fearing every moment a copy of the "firman" might arrive, and then the Governor would not have any ostensible excuse for allowing him to escape; but he was a good kind of man, and had been in friendly relations with him and his agent there, who had fee'd him no doubt pretty often. But fear for the consequences to himself, when the officers of the Porte at Constantinople should hear of his having allowed the *great man* to escape (for Mr. Barker's reputation as a very important personage had been long established), kept him several days undecided.

He knew that the Turks would on such occasions seek to seize the Consul and hold him as a hostage, and by threatening to kill him obtain, perhaps, better terms from the British Government.

This is how Turks reason. At last the temptation of a handsome pair of *English* pistols, silver mounted, was too great; he consented to wink at his escape in a small boat of the country,

but gave private instructions to the “Rais,” or captain of the craft, to take and deliver him up at Beyrout to the authorities there, and sent soldiers down to the port, when he knew the boat had set sail, to make it appear he had taken all the precautions necessary for the security of his person, reckoning on the confusion attendant on the war at Constantinople to make the matter blow over.

Mr. Barker arrived at Latakia on the 20th of March, and on the 28th he left in the small boat, a sail of a few hours, for Joonee, but was detained by contrary winds and calms three days. On arriving off the Bay of Joonee, within sight of Beyrout, he perceived that the “Rais” and the two boatmen intended going on to Beyrout; he therefore compelled them, pistol in hand, to land him then and there, in the territory and district under the authority of the Emir Besheer, chief of the Druses; and then paying them, and taking a horse, he rode up to “Daire il Kammar,” the residence of the Emir. Here he was received in the most cordial manner. The Emir then, and nearly always, independent of the Porte, was glad to show his

respect for a British officer, for he had always been known to be attached to the British party and interest in the East. This was traditional in the family of the Prince of the Druses, perhaps in opposition to the French, who protected the Christian Maronite Catholics, his old hereditary enemies : he therefore received him with cordiality, telling him he was very welcome, and safe in his territory. He then sent him well attended to the monastery of Harissa, distant one hour's ride from Joonee, and four hours from Beyrout, where his family had arrived by another route from Tripoli, by land, a short time previously.

His voyage and escape cost him altogether 1,500 piasters.

As soon as the French Consuls at Tripoli and Beyrout heard that the bird had escaped their clutches, they applied to the Pacha of Acre, who had received from the Porte the duplicate of the "firman," to arrest him ; and were very angry with the Superior of the monastery, Padre Salvadore, who was supposed to be under the protection of France, for having given him shelter and hospitality.

Mr. Barker writes to a friend in French, thus translated :—

“ The Rev. Father Salvadore has just received a letter from the French Consul at Tripoli; in answer to one which the Father had written to him, in justification of his conduct for having received me into his monastery of the Roman Catholic faith ; but the good Father has not been able to obtain the approbation nor even to appease the wrath of the Consul. It would seem to me to be very unworthy the character of the French nation to vent in invectives, and in powerless malice, their anger on this poor man, who in reality did nothing more in this affair than accept a *fait accompli*, and make a merit of necessity. The Consul tells him that he ought to have gone to Tripoli, and there enter a protest against the Emir Besheer. Can any one suppress a laugh at so preposterous an idea ? Why, it would require the armies of Buonaparte to have influence with the Emir ! and even then he would set them at defiance in his inaccessible mountains.

“ But in reality the Father Superintendent Salvadore is not amenable to the jurisdiction of

the French Consul at Tripoli, but to his Superior at Jerusalem. The French Consul at Beyrouth has been fool enough to write to his superior officer at Aleppo, that the Pacha of Acre is going to take measures for compelling me to leave the monastery by force. You may justly appreciate what attention I pay to such *fan-faronade.*"

Mr. Barker gives an account of his flight in a private letter to Mr. Hamilton, Under Secretary of State, in these words :—

" WILLIAM HAMILTON, Esq.,
etc. etc. etc.
Foreign Office.

" HARISSA, 1st May, 1807.

" The official account of my escape from Aleppo will inform you how that time has been employed; and your friendship for Mrs. Barker, with your knowledge of the vile roads of this desolate country, will have induced you to be anxious to know how she bore the fatigues of her journey, which was in itself sufficiently difficult; but it was rendered doubly painful and distressing by her affliction for the recent loss of a darling son, and her anxiety for

my absence and personal safety. But ‘God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb ;’ with this Divine protection, she was enabled to surmount all obstacles, and we arrived here nearly at the same time, both in perfect health, with Mr. H., and a little girl three years and half old, the sole relict of all our joys and all our cares.

“ Although I was detained eight days at Latakia, the news of my detention, luckily for Mrs. Barker, did not reach her but with that of my liberation. You may easily conceive the painful moments which I passed in that place. I was informed from the first of the Porte’s application to the Pacha of Acre, and I knew the Turks well enough to be assured that he would gladly seize the opportunity of getting an Englishman into his clutches in order to serve various purposes on the occasion of a British force coming to summon the place to surrender. *He*, I knew, would imagine that by threatening to murder me, my countrymen would desist from their attack, but *I* was not quite so sure that the commander of such an expedition would think himself warranted in suspending the execution of ‘orders’ by the

consideration of the personal danger to which he would expose an obscure individual. It has pleased God, however, to spare me the excruciating feelings of such a situation, and we are now in perfect security. This monastery is a magnificent lodging; the air is good, and the water excellent; and as all human happiness is merely relative, we are disposed to be contented with our present situation by reflecting on the dangers we have passed, among which must be numbered the plague, which on our leaving Aleppo had begun, and has since broken out with great violence. Our poor boy Sidney, who had attained the age of five years, was cut off in the highest state of florid health by one of those malignant distempers which are observed to prevail immediately preceding the manifestation of the plague, and are, in my opinion, no other than the plague itself, which you know assumes so many horrid shapes.

“The poignant affliction which I have felt, and still feel, for the death of my son, will not permit me to congratulate you, and Mrs. Hamilton, on the birth of your two dear little

ones, without at the same time preferring my most fervent prayers to heaven that you may never know the pain of that awful separation."

The French Consuls at Tripoli and Beyrouth continued to prosecute their idea of being able to dislodge Mr. Barker from the monastery in which he had taken refuge, and he wrote to the Superior of the Order of the Terra Santa at Jerusalem on the subject, as follows :—

"Al' Molto Reverendo Padre Padrone Colendi^{ssq}
—Il Padre Morione Presidente, etc., etc.

"Essendo venuto alla mia cognizione che
l' Illust^{mo} Console G——s non cessa d'inquietare
di parte di Vossignoria Riverenda, il degno mio
ospite il Molto Riverendo Padre Salvadore, per
motivo della mia residenza in Harissa, a fine
di risparmiare a Voi tutti maggior' fastidio in
questo fatto, ho stimato bene colla presente
significare a V.S.R. che Parole, Scritture, e
Processe sono tutti vani. Ci voglian' cannoni,
giacchè altro la Forza Armata non mi potra

mai far' uscire di questo bel' Monastero, tanto chè mi piacce abitarlo.

“Che il prelodato Illust^{mo} Signor Console si astenga dunque di più eccitare questo povero Religioso, a fare una malgrazia tanto contrario al suo santo ufficio, quanto e ripugnante al carattere suo individuale, e laquale facendosi pure, non potrebbe avere verun’ buon’ risultato.

“Mi prevolgo di quest’ occasione tanto desiderata di proferire a V.S.R. la mia servitù ed assicurarla della perfetta stima colla quale ho l’onore d’essere.

“Umiliss^{mo} e devotiss^{mo} Servitore,

“JOHN BARKER.”

What made him still more indignant at this persecution was the great age of the priest in question, being above eighty years of age, and he relates some curious anecdotes of his residence as a guest with this amiable but almost childish ecclesiastic.

“He had two statuettes of St. Anthony, the patron saint of the monastery. One was a dapper little figure two feet high, made of

plaster of Paris, who stood at the entrance for the adoration of the people as they mounted the staircase; and the other a figure of wood, almost as large as life, which graced the church. The peasants, who flocked with their children on saints' days and holy days, to invoke the blessing of the saint, were in the habit of presenting votive offerings in the shape of small pieces of coin of silver or of gold, as the case might be, and after their departure the old Father was sure to say to me, 'See, they have given a piece of three to the little Saint Anthony [Sant' Antonio il Piccolo], but they have given one of ten to the large one [Sant' Antonio il Grande].'

"One day going up the staircase with this old guardian of the monastery, who was profuse in his genuflections before 'Sant' Antonio il Piccolo,' he expected the same demonstrations of respect from me, but I told him that it was a rule I had made, never to doff my hat to those who were not likely to return me the compliment.

"This reminds one of what is related of the Russian peasants, in the time of Peter the

Great, or of one or two reigns before him, who had never seen looking-glasses, which were introduced into Russia by the French from Paris, and who seeing their *own* figures reflected in a fine gilt frame, believed they were pictures of saints [which abound in Russia in the corner of every room] introduced from Europe; in fact, believed them to be foreign saints, and immediately made the sign of the cross and bowed their heads down; and on leaving the apartment said to one another, ‘What polite saints the French have! Ours never return our salutes as these do! ’

“But what amused me most of all were the paras and pieces of silver coin that were strung together and hung upon the neck of the little image,—to remind, no doubt, the faithful of the most essential part of their religious duties.

“On certain other days the peasant women used to come to the monastery to confess to the Reverend Father Salvadore. One day, after they were gone, I said in a jocular manner to him, ‘I am sure, Padre, you must hear sometimes some queer confessions. Is it not

so? Now tell me candidly.' ‘Ah! non mi dicono le grosse,’ said he.”¹

Perched on the top of Lebanon, in a dwelling to be reached only by almost impassable roads, through rocks and brushwood, hiding narrow mountain tracks to serve as pathways, at many thousand feet above the level of the sea, one would have thought his work for the transmission of news to have been completely paralysed, and that he would now have been prevented from attempting to carry on any correspondence, and rested awhile from his labours. Not so. He was more active than ever. His letters, copies of which have remained to us, addressed in all directions to all his agents, breathe the same earnestness to send “ Dispatches to India, to Constantinople, and to the Commanders of His Majesty’s forces in the Mediterranean.”

He writes from Harissa on the 23rd June, 1807, to Mr. D. A. Sciperas, German Consul at Cyprus, the British Vice-Consul having left the island:—

“Accept my best thanks for the very essen-

¹ “They don’t tell me the thumping big sins.”

tial service you have rendered His Britannic Majesty, and to me personally, in facilitating my correspondence with His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in Egypt. Since the departure of our agent from Cyprus, it has become an object of great public importance for me to procure the advantage of corresponding with some person there on whose zeal and activity I can depend, for keeping me regularly informed of such important political events as are known in that island; and I therefore take the liberty to invite you, in your capacity of German Consul, to fulfil that office in the absence of Mr. Vondiziano. As the information which you may convey to me will be transmitted to the Government in India, it is necessary that you be particularly precise as to dates and every other circumstance that can establish its authenticity; and for the same reason I authorize you to incur on my account any expense which may be necessary for the express transmission of your communications to me, whether by boats *ad hoc*, or by persons expressly dispatched by you as bearers of your packets.

“As the object of keeping the Government

of India informed of the important events passing at this critical moment in Europe and in Turkey is very great, I entreat you not to regard any expense attending your correspondence with me, which I shall be ready to reimburse in such way as you will point out. On every occasion of a letter reaching your hands to my address in the absence of an immediate occasional conveyance, I beg you will transmit it to me by express boat, either direct to Gebail, or if that should not be possible to Tripoli, under cover to Mr. Catziflis, British Agent, who you know is perfectly at his ease in consequence of his good understanding with the Governor of that place [Berber], who is also much my friend.

“If my packet reaches Egypt in safety, I hope in future to receive direct communications from thence, in consequence of some arrangement which I have made to that effect. I mention this circumstance in order that you should not imagine that some other person than yourself in Cyprus is charged with the care of forwarding my correspondence with the Commander-in-Chief. I am extremely glad to

hear you had found the means of forwarding my packet by a person in your confidence; but you do not mention the circumstance by which you were prevented sending my dragoman along with it. I hope, however, through your assistance he will have been able to follow it to Alexandria, as his reaching that place without delay is of considerable importance; and I enclose a letter for him, which in case of his departure I beg you will endeavour to forward to him to the care of the Commander-in-Chief. The news, whenever it may reach you, of H.M. the Emperor of Germany having joined the Allies, you will be pleased to send me by express, as likewise the important event of our ships beginning to capture Turkish merchant vessels.

“A day or two ago an English frigate appeared off this coast, which visited within our sight a boat of the country belonging to Beyrouth, and although it had considerable property on board in groups of money, I hear the frigate did not take anything from it but a few jars of water, and then proceeded towards Cyprus.

“Although I have mentioned some of the

leading political circumstances on which I am extremely anxious to receive information, you will be pleased to consider yourself warranted in increasing the expense of an express transmission for events of much less importance than those noticed in this letter. You will have heard of the revolution which has lately taken place in the Government of the Druses, in consequence of which the town of Gebail is now under the command of my friend Emir Hassan, and he at present inhabits that place. You may, therefore, freely send boats there, and recommend your dispatches for me to the care of the Emir."

Not satisfied with writing, he sent also one of his dragomen, who had accompanied his family, with dispatches. He continued his daily—indeed, hourly, correspondence with Tripoli, Latakia, Aleppo, Constantinople, Bagdad, Bus-sorah, Egypt, Cyprus, Malta, etc.; in short, he was indefatigable and unwearied in his efforts to transmit information to his official superiors and employers.

No man was ever imbued with a more earnest

desire to benefit his country and to assist in its struggle for liberty, threatened by the successes of the French under Buonaparte. His good sense of discrimination also directed him in the nature of the information he transmitted ; and we find him writing to ask for more explicit and assured accounts before he would transmit them to India.

He says to Mr. Sciperas at Cyprus :—

“The news which you have been pleased to communicate to me is of the highest importance, and demands my best thanks ; but as you have not mentioned upon what authority it rests, I am thereby deprived of the advantage of transmitting the intelligence to India, and therefore beg, if you can vouch for the veracity of it, that you will instantly on the receipt of this send me a few lines to that effect by an express boat, either to Gebail or Tripoli, in the manner which I before pointed out to you. I have the honour to enclose a packet for His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in Egypt, which I beg to recommend to your usual care in forwarding to its destination.”

CHAPTER VII.

Climate of Lebanon.—Dearness and Rarity of Provisions.—Irksomeness of his Seclusion.—Lebanon People eat Raw Meat.—Anecdote.—How the Lebanon Women manage their Horns.—Their manner of Life.—Attempts to Escape.—Peace declared.—Return to Aleppo.—Public Entry.—Its Effect and Cost.—Public Opinion of Mr. Barker's Character.—His peculiar need of Self-reliance.—French Exclusiveness and Decree.—Hassoun Effendi's Practical Jokes on a Priest ; on a Bishop.—The whole fraternity of Monks blacken their Faces.

H E found the Monastery of Harissa a delightful residence in summer : the light fresh air and clear cold water most agreeable ; very hot, however, during the day, but delightfully cool during the night, the buoyancy and lightness of the atmosphere predisposing to sleep, and a most refreshing sensation of comfort on awaking, so different from the heavy air of the seaside during the summer months, where the thermometer is at the same height night and day, which is extremely fatiguing to the nerves, causing one to awake out of sleep without feeling refreshed at all—if, indeed, any sleep can be called such in so hot a temperature.

The fresh mountain air of Lebanon was invigorating, and Mr. Barker's appetite was excellent, but he found great difficulty in procuring provisions, and was compelled to pay very high prices for any article of subsistence; even salt had to be brought from a great distance up to the top of a rocky mountain, where miles might be walked without finding an open space more than ten yards square. He relates the fact of his having once in travelling rode with his servants a full hour before they could find a level spot large enough to pitch a tent upon.

Meat is very rare, and when obtained is only goat-flesh. The population of Castrewan live on "bourghoul," which is wheat boiled and ground very coarsely, and then dried, and afterwards boiled again and cooked with butter. Their other aliments are goat's milk, vegetables, and fruits in the summer, walnuts and raisins. They very rarely taste meat except at some fixed festivals.

Mrs. Barker perceived one day that the meat brought from the coast sensibly diminished, and she suspected that the woman in whose house they were lodging was pilfering, and in-

structed her cook, an Armenian named Aroteen, to keep watch at night while pretending to be asleep. He did so, and saw the woman come with a knife and cut off slice after slice; but to his great surprise he found that she swallowed the pieces raw, just as she cut them off, and did not masticate them; indeed, the meat was so tough that she could not have done otherwise.¹

It is not surprising that this poor woman had never tasted meat except in the national dish "hareesay," pounded up with "bourghoul," because in all countries the poor cannot procure that which is not within their pecuniary means, and what in some countries is most common is

¹ No doubt she enjoyed the feast amazingly, for such an opportunity of obtaining a change of diet by animal food perhaps never before fell in her way. Fuel is rare in Lebanon and Castrewan, where the only trees are mulberry trees for the cultivation of the silk worm, and walnut trees, which are never cut down; there is no coal, meat is never roasted, but simply pounded in a marble mortar mixed with the above-named "bourghoul," and half boiled, so that she had been in the habit of eating it nearly raw. The general food of the natives consists of vegetables, milk thickened with flour, or milk turned sour by an artificial process, and called "leban," eaten with bread or bourghoul. The ovens are heated with thorns and brambles.

rare in others.¹ Thus Mrs. Barker at Marseilles was in need of a wet-nurse, and sent to the country at some distance from that city for a peasant woman, who, on arrival, happening to see some fresh butter on the table which had been made by shaking cream in a bottle, asked what it was, and on being told it was butter, exclaimed in wonderment, “Oh, then *that* is butter! C'est ça du beurre! du beurre!” and declared she had never seen any in her life, oil being the only vehicle for cooking in her part of the country.

Mrs. Barker was also surprised to find that the women slept with the silver horns, called “tantour,” on their heads, sometimes studded with coloured stones, very heavy and cumbersome, by making a hole in the wall to rest the top of the horn, and placing a small cushion under the head.

¹ The Druses and Maronites who inhabit the Lebanon and Castrewan district are an abstemious people, for the good reason that provisions are scarce, and have to be brought thither from a great distance. Neither wheat, barley, nor oats are cultivated on the mountains; all the cereals come from Beyrout and the other ports on the coast, bought with money produced from silkworm cultivation, almost the only industry in

By degrees the dreariness of his exile began to tell on Mr. Barker's health ; he fell ill with fever, and had recourse to the universal remedy, sulphate of quinine, which temporarily removed the fever, but brought on another indisposition not so easily cured.

The difficulties of procuring provisions, and servants, compelled him and his family, now consisting of his wife and two daughters, to lead a life of privation ; and its monotony and seclusion rendered it irksome. From the great height of Lebanon above he looked on the immense expanse of sea, and watched anxiously at times for the appearance of a British frigate, in hope of being able to communicate with the commander.

At last he perceived that some letters coming to him from Egypt and Cyprus had been intercepted ; and he felt an *isolation* rendered still more effective by the fear of an indefinite prolongation of the war, and lost all hope of getting away from the coast of Syria, unless by some fortunate circumstance which would bring

those mountains, except it be weaving “abahs,” cloaks, and all kinds of silk textures, woven with gold thread.

a British man-of-war to the coast. What plan could be adopted?—To charter a vessel of the country at Tripoli, and steal on board by night, in the hope of getting to Cyprus, Rhodes, or one of the islands of the Archipelago. He therefore wrote to his friend at Tripoli to charter a small schooner for this purpose, and with his family went down to the sea coast, and rented a small hut in a little hamlet called “Serber,” from which place, being within a quarter of a mile from the Bay of Joonee, he could get on board with his family in the night very easily.

Although the risk of being taken by Turkish brigs-of-war—a number of which were always at Beyrouth, ever looking towards the Bay of Joonee—was very great, still he found a skipper who undertook to come to the spot, and take him and his family on board; but just as the night was to have been fixed for the escape, his little daughter fell very dangerously ill, and he was obliged to send counter instructions. There is very little doubt that if he had succeeded in getting on board (which he might easily have done, for the spot chosen is unfrequented by fishermen, and the people of the village hamlet

were all in his favour; for when one knows the language of a country, one gets on very well with natives, who are always friendly to those who speak their language,) he would have had to run the risk of the wind becoming unfavourable suddenly, or calm, which occurs very generally on this coast, particularly the latter, on account of the high mountains of Lebanon, and Anti-Lebanon, which run all along the coast of Syria and Palestine, as far as Antioch, and continue again till they nearly meet the Taurus range. He says himself,—

“The ship was ready, and the captain asked me to fix my time for embarking, when our little girl fell sick of a fever that brought her to the point of death, and was probably the providential cause of our having escaped some much greater misfortune than being prisoners on these mountains.”

“Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.” His position became at last so irksome, that he would perhaps have run these risks rather than remain at Harissa. Fortunately the war ceased; peace between England and Turkey was declared, and he received the joyful news that a firman

had been sent to Beyrout to that effect on the 22nd March, 1809. He therefore wrote immediately to engage a vessel to come from Tripoli for him. It was, however, nearly the end of April before he arrived at Latakia, where he remained also some time before a “*takterawan*,” or litter, could be procured to convey Mrs. Barker and the children to Aleppo.

He finally set off, and arrived at Aleppo on the 2nd of June. His public entry was more splendid than that of Monsieur de Corancez in 1802, having had *seven* led horses, a military guard of honour and music, a salute of guns from the castle, etc. The expenses, however, attendant on this official recognition of an officer of the British Government, cost 5,000 piasters to the Company; but it was indispensable, and, as things go in the East, of the highest importance, in order to impress the rebellious and lawless part of the Turkish population with a certain degree of awe and respect for the influence of the British nation at Constantinople—the only consideration capable of keeping them somewhat within bounds.

The position of a Consul, whose business is to

uphold the interests of the subjects of the nation he is sent to represent, becomes very precarious when, as is generally the case, he is far removed from the protection of the Ambassador under whose ægis he happens to be placed ; and it frequently happens, also, that political considerations intervene to render the assistance he may expect to receive just as precarious, and then he is thrown entirely on his own resources to repel the attacks which, from the pride, insolence, and fearless audacity of Mohammedans, from time to time crop up.

In such positions Mr. Barker very frequently found himself ; but no public officer in Syria or Egypt ever had a greater reputation for courage, tact, and ability than he. His fame on this score spread all over Syria and Egypt, and he enjoyed to the day of his death a consideration never even equalled by any other person.

The public, always an impartial judge, saw the zeal, integrity, ability, and honest purpose which impelled all his actions, public and private, and thought very naturally, “ What a valuable servant this man must be to his Government ! What influence he must have ! ” And, as “ in-

fluence" is the *one* and *only* thing needful in the East, a corresponding importance was attached to him and his acts,—which however was very far from being supported by any reality, or at least such as was supposed. He says:—

"Ambassadors are generally so much occupied by considerations of such political interest, and consequent importance, which are put forward by their Governments in rapid succession, that they have not the *time* necessary to occupy themselves with matters relating to merchants or private individuals at a distance, in a province far removed from under their immediate observation. And yet how many wars would have been prevented, and millions of money saved, if more attention had been paid to some apparently trifling event,—some little cloud rising on the horizon, which by neglect has become a darkening storm, and led to a great catastrophe!"

Mr. Barker stood in peculiar need of the consideration I speak of, more than in general other consular officers, because Aleppo was a city placed as it were in a desert, far from the sea, away from the usual protection of men-of-war at a seaport, ready to come and assist

in any emergency. The Government of the country, besides, had for many years been only nominally that of the Sultan, but in reality in the hands of two conflicting parties, one of whch, the “Janissaries,” was generally the stronger, and the Pacha sent by the Porte was a mere cypher, incapable of protecting him if he would,—so much so, that Mr. Barker and Mr. Maseyk, the Dutch Consul, took upon themselves by turns to send him and his servants his daily repasts.

On the 13th of December, 1809, he writes to a friend :—

“For my part, I have long since adopted the resolution of *never in any case* applying to Constantinople to the Ambassador for assistance in my altercations with the Turks.”

To this “resolution,” however, he did not strictly adhere, for circumstances compelled him to deviate from it on certain important occasions; but these words prove how little assistance he expected from that quarter as a general rule.

All his letters at this time breathe great apprehension of another rupture between England and Turkey, from Buonaparte’s successes;

but on receiving news of the Peace of Vienna signed between Austria and France, he began to be more at ease, yet still fearing Buonaparte's ambition might lead to "complications," though he never had the least doubt of his *final* ruin. The following paragraph evinces great sagacity of discernment on political matters, and a true *prevision* of coming events :—

" WILLIAM HAMILTON, Esq.,

etc. etc. etc.

" Foreign Office.

" ALEPPO, 13th Dec., 1809.

" . . . But notwithstanding all this, I am still of opinion that Buonaparte is in a worse position than he was two or three years ago; nor will I yet renounce the idea that the present crisis is the most hopeful period since the beginning of the Revolution, which I always considered as a dreadful conflagration, to be extinguished only by the natural effects of its own ravages, which fools call '*successes* of an incomparable conqueror.' For unlike the natural labours of the traveller, of whom

every step forward curtails the length of his journey, Buonaparte's career, according to my view of it, resembles the frantic efforts of a man who is forcing up a high and steep hill a ball of snow—a labour in which every step of progression, so far from leading to final success whilst it seems to lessen what is still to be done, is only carrying him through perilous advances to that part of the *acclivity* whence the accumulated weight of the body to be resisted, and propelled, must crush, and hurl him to the bottom with astonishing rapidity and utter perdition."

His patriotic enthusiasm breaks out in the following passage in another letter :—“ . . . I am anxious to see what the Edinburgh Reviewers will now say for their hero ; whether they will still endeavour to stimulate him to fresh exertions in the hopeful project of supreme dominion, or at last frankly avow that it could have been considered only by a madman, and applauded by the perverse judgment of opposition writers. They must at last consign him over to the contempt as well as detestation of posterity. I thank my

God that He has always given me sense enough to despise him still more than to hate him and all his works. . . . Meanwhile I congratulate you most sincerely on the high pinnacle of true glory to which it has pleased God to raise our dear country. May she long preserve that proud pre-eminence among nations, continuing to be the dread and envy of them all!—while the inexhaustible resources of her prosperity shall still baffle sophistical prophecies of desponding Edinburgh Reviewers, and confound the shallow politics of *all sorts* of admirers of French domineering prepotence."

In those days political differences of nationality were strongly marked by exclusive relations :—

"Mr. Rousseau [French Consul at Aleppo] assembled his 'nation,' that is, all French subjects, in order to communicate to them the imperious command of the French Ambassador at Constantinople, that they should renounce the foreign protections [which they had obtained to enable them to remain at Aleppo and continue their mercantile business], under

pain of forfeiting their *rights* as French subjects; and at the same time read to them a tremendous injunction from Monsieur de la Tour Maubourg *not* to have any connexion or intercourse with the *English*, so that Mr. Burkhardt and myself are completely sent to Coventry,—a terrible *decree* of blockade, which will be as effective as has been that of the French at Berlin!"

He laughs at such nonsense, having always had himself most friendly *private* relations with all nations, being most cosmopolitan in his ideas (at the same time very patriotic in all public matters of nationality), and shows how far he was above petty considerations, and in advance of the age he lived in.

Mr. Barker's first dragoman, Mr. Nahoom Hassoun, who had been sent by him with dispatches to Cyprus and Egypt, returned to Aleppo with him. He was a very clever, intelligent, and honest man, full of anecdote, of fun, and much attached to Mr. Barker. He was also a "baratlee" of the Porte—that is, a person peculiarly under the Porte's protection. And here, with our reader's permis-

sion, we will introduce an episode which perhaps may be interesting and amusing.

Many years after Mr. Hassoun's return to Aleppo, he decided on sending his second son, Riskallah Hassoun, now Hassoun Effendee, an eminent Oriental scholar and poet, to Dayre Zimmar, an Armenian monastery in Mount Lebanon, to be educated and brought up as a priest. He had previously had him instructed in the different styles of literature of the Arabic language at Aleppo, by the most learned Shaykhs of the Mohammedan persuasion (for the Christians rarely study the higher branches); but unfortunately the vocation of an ecclesiastic was not congenial to his taste. Instead of studying the Breviary and Missal, he read and wrote poetry, and at his father's death he left the monastery and went to seek his fortune at Constantinople: and there he attracted the attention of His Excellency Fuad Pacha, Minister of the Porte for Foreign Affairs, who appointed him his private secretary.

Fuad Pacha himself was a poet, and appreciated Hassoun Effendee's talents, particularly

his beautiful calligraphy, considered by the Orientals as of the highest importance;—for in a country where printing is not in use, and where manuscripts form the only medium for the transmission of literature, fine writing becomes a necessity.

When Fuad Pacha went to Syria in 1860, about the affair of the massacre of the Christians in Mount Lebanon, Hassoun Effendee accompanied him as his Arabic secretary. One day when Fuad Pacha was dining with the Patriarch of the monastery where Hassoun had been sent to be educated in his younger days, the Minister told the Patriarch that he would give orders to his secretary about a certain matter which regarded the Armenians, when the Patriarch said, “Oh, Excellency, do not throw me into the hands of this man.” On Fuad Pacha exhibiting great surprise, and asking his reasons, the Patriarch spoke as follows :—

“ When this your secretary was a lad, he was placed in our seminary for young priests at Dayre-Zimmar, and being the best versed in Arabic, he was ordered to teach an Armenian

priest who had come from Mount Ararat to read; but as the pupil happened to be very stupid, he had great difficulty in doing so, and could only get him to learn one chapter of the gospel, which he read every Sunday pretty well. But Hassoun, to get rid of the job, purposely changed the mark in the book. When the priest stood up to read, he knew some part of what he had studied by heart; but when he could no longer find the place, he broke down, to the great merriment of all the choristers, of whom Hassoun was one.

“Another trick he played us was this: he went to the Bishop and told him a very funny story; and at the same time, while relating it, he appeared to have a fit of coughing, or rather made a peculiar husky noise in his throat; and every time he had (that is, pretended to have) a fit, the Bishop, reminded of the story, used to burst out into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. Hassoun took an opportunity to do this when the Bishop was performing the Mass, so that in the middle of his intoning he burst out laughing.

“When Hassoun had made up his mind to

leave the monastery, one Christmas Eve, when the monks have prayers at midnight, he feigned sickness, and declined going to the chapel. He had prepared some ink mixed with oil, in which he had put rusty nails, and instead of water he put this ink into the holy water vessel, at the entrance of the chapel, taken by all who go in to make a cross on their foreheads; and the very devout put it on the cheeks and nose. Therefore, when they were all assembled, and the candles were lit, they looked at each other and saw their faces were smeared all over with the marks of three fingers, which are used in taking up the holy water, and the next morning they were rubbing the skin off their faces to get the dye off. He did not wait to see the end of this last practical joke, but ran away to Beyrouth; but before going, he wrote funny verses on the doors of each of the monks' cells, in accordance with their characters."

When the Pacha heard this, he said to the Patriarch, "How could you or any one expect that a poet could become a priest?"

When Hassoun Effendee had returned from

Damascus, where he had been sent on a mission, Fuad Pacha asked him about what the Patriarch had told him, and whether it was true. Hassoun, confused, answered evasively; but the Pacha compelled him to confess the truth, and relate the stories over again, and was convulsed in fits of laughter.

CHAPTER VIII.

Jelall il Deen Pacha.—Massacre of the Janissaries at Aleppo.—He kills five innocent Persons.—Only Two Upright Mohammedans.—The old system of Extortions and Cruelties.—Its Effects.—Replaced by Legal Spoliations and Malversations.—Examples shown.—The Council or Medjลiss.—A Turk's Opinion on the Supernatural Existence of the Ottoman Empire.—Arrival of Lady Hester Stanhope in Syria.—Her Entry into Acre. Burkhardt the Traveller.—Shooting and Sport in Syria.—Popolani's Practical Jokes.—Nearly Fatal.—Large Bags of Game.

IN the latter part of the year 1812, Ragheb Pacha, then Governor of Aleppo, lost the little authority he possessed by an unsuccessful expedition. The Porte ordered another Pacha, called Jelall il Deen Pacha (otherwise known by the name of "T'chapan Ogloo," literally "the son of the shepherd," which in all probability he was,) to supersede Ragheb Pacha. At the approach of this man, the chiefs of the Janissaries, who had heard of his character, secreted their jewels and valuables in the European warehouses, and in the hands of the Jew Consuls, and of the Europeans.

He pretended for some time to be so entirely engrossed by field sports, that they could never get him to attend to any business, and were thereby completely thrown off their guard; when he thought he had sufficiently lulled their suspicions, he invited them to a garden party, and they were to assemble at the palace which he inhabited out of town, near the gardens called “Shayk’h Abou Bekkar.”

All the chiefs of the Janissary party, twenty-one in number, arrived unarmed at the place appointed, with only one or two attendants to hold their horses: it was a rule among them that they were never to bring more than two attendants each on such occasions—a pipe-bearer and a groom; for they were afraid of one another.

As soon as they were all assembled with their pipe-bearers, the grooms holding the horses *outside* the walls, the Pacha caused the door of the courtyard to be shut; and his soldiers, who were posted upon the balconies which are to be found in all Turkish houses and palaces, fired down and killed them all, with their pipe-bearers. Not one escaped: their heads were cut off, and

thrown into the marble basin in the middle of the courtyard, which receives the water from the jet, and which at that time happened to be empty and dry. The Pacha then rode immediately into the city, before the news of the massacre could be known to the remainder of the corps of Janissaries, and seized the castle ; thus this party was completely broken up, and the members all disappeared, flying by night in all directions.¹ (25th November, 1813.)

He then claimed all the property which had been secreted, and recovered a great deal, but the Jew Consuls and some of the Europeans would not give up anything, and he could not use force to compel them ; and when after several years had passed and the families of these Janissaries returned to Aleppo, these persons, among whom were some of the Jew Consuls, denied having received anything at all, or gave up very little.

¹ The massacre of the Janissaries was thought to have released Turkey from an insolent and turbulent soldiery. Perhaps their destruction was a necessity. But afterwards it turned out that it removed the only check that public opinion, through those unruly Praetorian Guards, exercised over the arbitrary will of a despotic Sovereign, and thus tore up the last rough-and-ready charter of Ottoman liberties.

One of them, however, Salomon-Alteras, who was a merchant of the Jewish persuasion, and not a Consul, scrupulously returned all the money and jewels which had been confided to him, amounting to a very large sum.

Jelall il Deen Pacha proceeded to attack Haji Bekeer Aga Giowalek Zada, Governor of Antioch; but this chief, with all his people, got into three boats at Suedeeah, with all his treasures and valuables, and succeeded in getting to Egypt: a great disappointment to the Pacha, for the Governor was reputed to be very rich.

Mr. Barker speaks of this Jellal il Deen Pacha with the greatest horror:—

“Our Pacha yesterday put to death two innocent persons, because he began to fear a popular insurrection, and thought it necessary to inspire terror by fresh examples of his cruelty and his power.

“On the first day of his arrival here, before he had any power over the Janissaries, he walked through the streets *incognito*, followed by an executioner, with the express deliberate design of cutting off the heads of a few wretched shopkeepers, as a thing of course, which is always

done by Pachas to show and establish their authority in a new Government. Five innocent victims were seized (not selected), on frivolous pretexts, in the different quarters of the city, and murdered in cold blood before him!

"Can one be charmed by the artificial and perfidious smiles of such a monster on a visit of ceremony? For my part, although I know there is no danger of my being decapitated too, I cannot help feeling a kind of involuntary horror and shudder as long as the audience lasts."

So much for some of the Turkish Pachas. Mr. Barker, however, speaks well of a few who were tolerably humane. But he has frequently declared that he had during his long residence in Syria met with only *two* Mohammedans who were really upright, honest men, who acted up to their profession of faith with the most scrupulous exactness. One was a member of a noble family, and chief at Aleppo, named Haji Hashem Abd'rahman Effendee; and the other a carpenter who worked in his house many years, Hadji Abdallah."¹

¹ Of course this is meant to be taken in the superlative

This last-named man, Hadji Abdallah, during the long thirty days' fast of Ramadan, would rise at daybreak, and would work hard without intermission, and without eating or even drinking anything, *fourteen hours*; and this during days when the thermometer stood at 80° or 90° in the shade. Of course he never smoked, but was very bigoted, and cooked his food himself.

We will not follow this Pacha, nor any other Pachas, in their expeditions against other chiefs. The description we have given of the state of Syria in the beginning of this century, before the introduction of regular troops, will serve for an account of all the revolutions and revolts which were continually breaking out in all parts of the Sultan's dominions. Every outbreak, every Pacha, with very few exceptions, resembled the preceding one; the names alone of the Governors and others who figured in the scenes, being changed. The atrocities, treachery, and robbery depopulated the country and dissipated its resources; whole districts became deserts,

degree. Mr. Barker had many sincere friends among the Mohammedans at Aleppo and at Antioch: he was always very popular, and retained their esteem to the last.

village after village ruined and abandoned, because the money which was extorted from the persons falsely accused of crimes, and which ruined whole families by the confiscations, *ultimately* went to feed the craving capital, and was absorbed by it without any profitable return whatever.

The stream of gold continued ever to flow to the capital from the provinces; but it was the life-blood of the Empire. Pachas were sent (and are still sent, but in a different manner) to "squeeze" the inhabitants of the towns, and *they* were "squeezed" themselves in return. The enormous sums required for carrying on the government at Constantinople came from this source; but when the Hatti Shreeef of Gulhaneh was promulgated, this resource was no longer available; a new era had dawned under the eye of European diplomatists, and other means were adopted to obtain money by apparent *legal* measures, which, however, were quite as ruinous. But what could be done? Money must be had at any price. The ambassadors of all the Powers at Constantinople could not go themselves into the provinces; and when re-

ports were sent in by the consular corps, they had no time to look closely into matters.

The same system, under another shape or form, was still in force: several plans were set on foot. The tithes were farmed in a particular manner, and became fertile sources of malversation; the usual taxes were doubled, and new taxes imposed. The “mejlisses” (or councils) of each town, combined with the Pachas or Governors to *legalize* their spoliations by a lying document called “Mazbata,” sent to the Porte signed by *all* the members of this council, which declared whatever they pleased, at the suggestion of the Pacha. Sometimes, however, this weapon could be used both ways, and the Porte was defrauded and despoiled.

For instance, the “Valee” or Pacha of a district, put up at auction the tithes on the Government account, and sent this certificate, the “Mazbata,” to the effect that after some weeks’ competition the farm was adjudged to a Christian or Jew merchant (generally a moribund one)—Abdallah, or Yoosouf, or Moossay. As soon as the harvest was ready to be taken in, or more generally when taken in coin, the money had

been collected and paid over to the Pacha's treasury, the "Mazbata" was again resorted to, to declare the Christian or Jew had become bankrupt, and that after the seals had been taken off his house and property, little or nothing had been found. When the Porte, unwilling to lose so large a sum perhaps as £300,000 or £400,000, sent an officer called "mombasher" to investigate, he was told that the Christian or Jew had fled, or was dead, and the "Mazbata" came again into play, and was delivered to the officer, who would receive a bribe, besides his fees, and declare all square, on his return to Constantinople. "For was not the 'Mazbata' there?" A second officer would be sent with the same result; and so on.

But this is an extreme case, which however *has* been known to have occurred in the Pachalic of Bagdad, and three "mombashers" were sent to no purpose one after the other,—two of whom we saw on their passage through Aleppo. In general the Porte took care to be on the safe side by rendering the Valees or Pachas responsible, but the iniquities committed by the system of "Mazbatas," under the authority of

the Porte, were frequent and ruinous. After twenty years' residence in habitual contact with this council or "mejliss," on public and private business wherever we have resided, we can with truth declare that we believe it to have been the most baneful and unfortunate concession, on apparently liberal principles, that could have been made to a country just emerging from anarchy, as the Empire then was.

The members of the Mejliss are always the rich landed proprietors; most of them the descendants of the rebel Pachas and "Beylerbeks," or "Deraybeks," who in the days of the Sultans Selim and Mahmoud, infested the Ottoman Empire. They are *de facto* the governors of the country for their own benefit, and they always combine together whenever any matter is proposed against their collective interests, however secretly inimical they may be to one another. "We keep the people ignorant and oppressed, in order to be able to govern them, for otherwise how could we govern them?" was told us one day by Haji Halef Aga, one of the leading members of the Mejliss at Antioch. We could relate many cases of extortion, injustice,

and violence committed by this man, always under the legal sanction of the "Mazbata," but we could not find room for them in these pages.

We have no hesitation in saying that until some *sweeping* reforms be effected in the laws regulating the powers of the Mejisses, which exist everywhere, and some effectual check placed on their proceedings, it will be useless to think or talk of any improvement in the provinces of Turkey.

In spite of the system of *legal* spoliation, and other expedients adopted by the Porte to obtain money, the sums coming in, by reason of the general impoverishment going on for nearly a century, fell far short of what was obtained by the old system of confiscations ; and the increase in luxury, and the expenses consequent on the adoption of European military tactics, wars, etc., brought the finances of the Government again to a standstill. What was to be done ? Money must be had ; Lord Hobart and Mr. Foster cut the gordian knot by the *godsend* "Foreign Loans." At first a certain number of millions of pounds sterling were borrowed in order to enable the Government to call in all

the “*caimez*,” or paper money, and to issue coins representing intrinsic value, which was a necessary reform that could not be deferred; but the facility with which the Porte obtained loans,—indeed these were pressed upon the Sultan and his Ministers,—led to the immense debt of Turkey, and to its present difficulties.

In a letter dated September, 1805, Mr. Barker says :—

“ The Turkish Empire, like the fable of Mohammed’s coffin suspended between powers of equal attraction, while sustained by the jealousy of the great states of Europe, may be compared to a beautiful captive in the hands of a band of independent Barbary robbers, who every night retires to rest trembling at the thought of an impending assault from some ferocious bandit, and every morning awakes in astonishment that another sun has risen to behold her safety. Her fond imagination ascribes the miraculous security to the interposition of Providence, and I have been triumphantly told by a Turk that the truth of the Mohammedan religion obtained an infallible evidence from the supernatural existence of the Ottoman Empire.

“‘I challenge you, who are a Christian and a Consul,’ said he, ‘to produce another example, ancient or modern, where a people, long after their power of repelling aggression had ceased, has not only been suffered to continue in the list of independent nations, but whose Government is, like ours, assiduously courted and flattered by the Ambassadors of all the powerful nations of Europe.’”

This is very graphic : exactly how an Oriental would reason. We have frequently had occasion to notice the trite observations made by them of passing events, which evinced great penetration.

On the 20th August, 1812, Mr. Barker speaks in his letters of the “renowned” Lady Hester Stanhope, who had just then come to Syria :—

“The Honourable Frederic North, who passed a month with us, quitted Aleppo on the 22nd July, and is now, I reckon, at Damascus. He will probably meet there our illustrious and renowned countrywoman, Lady Hester Stanhope, and her party ; which, however, consists now of only Mr. Bruce and Doctor Meryon. Mr. Boughton [afterwards Sir William Bough-

ton], and Mr. Fiott [afterwards Doctor Lee], who passed the winter with us, have left Damascus for Smyrna and Constantinople. But the lustre of all ancient as well as modern travels in Syria will be eclipsed by the transcendent exploits of her ladyship, who is now at Darelil-Kammar, or in some other part of the mountains of the Druses, awaiting, it is said, a cooler season to descend to Baalbec, Damascus, Palmyra, and Aleppo. The mouth of every traveller who reaches Aleppo from Palestine is filled with tales of her influence at the court of Acre, and animated description of the grand effect of her public entry, and visit to the Pacha there, which she performed with all the honours due to a Pacha of three tails, riding on a war-charger, richly caparisoned, and wearing a splendid Mameluke dress, and on her head a green shawl, given her by Mehmed Ali Pacha, of Egypt, pistols in her horse's holsters, and on her own person a large Turkish scimitar, suspended by a red silken cord on one side, and a leather embroidered pouch for a Koran on the other. They descant with great satisfaction on her ladyship's beautiful purple embroidered

velvet dress, which glittered with innumerable little buttons, and the trousers embroidered in gold down the side. In this procession she was attended and followed by Mr. Bruce, wearing a dress *exactly* similar to her ladyship's. They extol the affable graces with which she conferred the ‘salaamlik’ (saluting) on the admiring crowd on either side, as she passed along; and they exaggerate her munificence, and the number of her attendants. They say that on her visiting the holy places at Jerusalem, she made the priests a donation of 5,000 piasters: that she never deigns to soil her fingers with any baser metal than gold, which she profusely distributes in her casual largesses; that she has a body-guard of Mamelukes on constant duty, and that her suite is composed of sixty persons. In short, if her ladyship should condescend to appear in this city, her coming will create a new epoch in the annals of Aleppo; and as the old people date events from the passage seventy years ago of the elephants for the Grand Seignor, the present race of mothers will hereafter compute their children's ages by the birth before, or after, the transit of the ‘English lady.’ ”

At this time Mr. Barker's house was constantly full of gentlemen travelling through Syria, and many arrived there preparatory to a journey to Palmyra, which was not always feasible on account of the Anazee Arabs. One gentleman, Mr. Boughton, had been waiting some time for an escort; and one morning, on being informed by Mr. Barker of some new obstacle which had presented itself, said to him, "Well, Mr. Barker, to tell you the truth, I hope the difficulties will become insurmountable."

Burkhardt, the great traveller, under the assumed name of "Shaykh Ibraheem," lived several months in Mr. Barker's house, and was very much regretted by him on his leaving for Palestine and Egypt, when he had learnt sufficient Arabic to start on his travels. He was much beloved at Aleppo, from the amiability of his disposition—sometimes put severely to the test.

Having accompanied Mr. Barker and some of his companions on a shooting expedition to Sfeeree, a village four hours distant from Aleppo, renowned for the great number of partridges near it, one of these young men, named

Bonaventura Popolani, a Venetian, notorious for playing practical jokes, dropped a hot coal into Burkhardt's large Turkish boots, just before he was about to put them on, and made off before the *denouement*. Burkhardt, smarting horribly from the burn, fired a pistol at Popolani, which he had in his girdle, without exactly knowing at the time what he was doing.

Popolani, on another occasion, ran a similar risk of losing his life by a practical joke. He put a frightful mask on his face, and presented himself to a Turkoman chief, who was so dreadfully horrified at the sight of what to him was an unknown monster (for he had never seen a mask in his life), that he fired a pistol he had in his girdle at Popolani, and the ball grazed his head.

Many practical jokes were played on him in retaliation. One evening, while he slept overwhelmed with fatigue after a long day's shooting, they smeared his face with sour milk, and the flies during the day kept worrying him, and as soon as it became dark the dogs kept licking him. At another time they shut him up in a barn with a live owl, of which they knew he was

much in fear. The owl kept flying about, and when they opened the door they found that he had swooned away.

Mr. Barker was one of the best “snap shots” in Syria, or perhaps anywhere. The first day in his life that he fired flying shots he bagged nine brace of partridges; and eight gentlemen with him that day, some of them old sportsmen, did not kill as many between them. Once in three days’ shooting he bagged thirty-three brace (sixty-six partridges), and on his return to Aleppo he placed them all—head and tail, one after the other—in two long lines, and fixed lighted candles at the two ends. He then invited the Superior of the Terra Santa Order of Monks, who was his next door neighbour, to come and see them *laid out*.

The jolly friar raised his arms in astonishment, and laughing, said, “What slaughter! This would be a time to sing a ‘De profundis’ or a ‘Requiem,’ but the Church will not permit it to be said for those who have died unconfessed and by a violent death.”

At another time, at Antioch, he shot seventy-two woodcocks in six hours’ sport. He had

been out after francolins, and not having had good sport, he was returning home at noon through the gardens, when he perceived there had been a great fall of woodcock in the night. He thought then he would see how many he could bag in six hours: he therefore sent his servants to his house for more ammunition and another gun; and before quite six o'clock he had bagged seventy-two,¹ which were put in the saddle-bags on the servant's mule, but which not sufficing to hold all, the man took off his "abah," or cloak, and making it into a sack, put the remainder in and loaded the mule.

¹ This was done with a flint gun.

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Barker's Illness at Damascus.—Adventure with an Arab Chief.—Mr. Barker's Courage ; and just Appreciation.—Death of his Two Daughters.—Lady Hester's Resignation to Death.—Horrors of the Plague at Aleppo, with Characteristic Anecdotes.—Syllogism of Abdallah Effendee.—Treachery of a Pacha. Story of Ebn Fedawee.—Sir Sidney Smith's Opinion of Mr. Barker.—The first Boat ever floated at Aleppo.

ON the 17th October, 1812, Mr. Barker set off with Mr. Bruce for Damascus, intending to go with Lady Hester Stanhope to Palmyra ; but on his arrival at Damascus he fell dangerously ill of a remittent fever, and was laid up in bed fourteen days. On his convalescence he ordered a “takterawan,” or litter, to be prepared for conveying him back to Aleppo, for he was too weak to ride. A “takterawan” is a small wooden room just a person's length, on which is fastened on each side a long strong shaft, and the machine is then suspended on the pack-saddles of two large mules, one following the other. “Takt” in Arabic means “bed,” and “rahwan” “amble,” representing the motion of

the mules' pace, which is a shuffle or ambling pace.

Mr. Beaudin, then his interpreter, did all he could to dissuade him from the journey along the line of desert by Homs and Hamah, "because," said he, "the chiefs of the Arabs in the vicinity of Damascus will not let you pass without levying black-mail in a large sum;" and he counselled his going to Beyrouth, and from thence by boat to Latakia; but Mr. Barker still persisted in his first resolution.

The next day the chief of the Arabs came himself to "make arrangements," and after pipes and coffee made a demand for a sum of money without the payment of which, he said, no one could pass through his territory. Mr. Barker laughed, raised his eyebrows, and tapping him on the shoulder, said he would go all the same, and dared him to prevent his journey. The chief, astonished at his words and actions, so different from what he expected, was inclined to be insolent and bully, when Mr. Barker, sitting bolt up and looking fiercely, said, "Look here, that poor merchants and miserable Jews should pay you money is one thing, but that a

person of my high rank and position should be mulcted is quite another. I am going to-morrow, and I shall be glad to see if you will dare to prevent me." So saying, he took the chief by the shoulder and pushed him out of the room.

As soon as he was gone, Mr. Beaudin fell down on his knees, and begged him to consider the danger he was going to subject them all to, and that the least that could happen to them would be to be robbed of everything and murdered. "No," said Mr. Barker, "the Arab will not be such a fool as to risk getting himself into trouble with the Government, for he is fully persuaded that I am well protected, and he would be only pricking his fingers with my porcupine quills without any benefit to himself."

He was not wrong in his calculations. But very few men, not even those who know the East thoroughly, would have had the courage to start after such an interview, wherein he bearded the lion in his den. Start he did, the next day, in a litter on two mules, with his servants and the usual escort of half a dozen horsemen only.

When the party had reached the open desert,

shortly after leaving the gardens of Damascus; a large troop of Arab horsemen were seen galloping towards them. Mr. Beaudin, half dead with fear, began to wring his hands as some of the Arabs came galloping up with their lances and cries, for they always make a great noise, and drew the curtains which shaded the traveller from the sun, and repeating to one another, “Wallah ma hee-eh — hada illo shwarib!” “This is not her — this one has moustachios!” and then they turned their horses’ heads and galloped away as fast as they had come.

It seems they had been sent on the part of the chief to meet Lady Hester Stanhope, who they expected would leave Damascus for Palmyra, and seeing a party from a distance, thought it might be her ladyship. He saw no more of them or any other Arabs, and Mr. Beaudin was *quitte pour la peur*. He returned to Aleppo on the 13th December, and on the 2nd January, 1813, he went to Sfeeree, in hopes of getting rid of his intermittent fever by change of air. He had four returns of this fever before the 11th March.

At Sfeeree he amused himself by seeing the villagers course the gazelles with greyhounds, as it was not the shooting season, which is in July and August; and he declares that “a greyhound which can take a gazelle in a fair run-down on the plain is as rare as a white crow.”

These dogs are much slighter than European greyhounds, but not so swift, because they have not the same strength: the English dogs beat them, but these latter soon have their feet cut by the stones, and are then disabled, whereas the Oriental greyhound has, like the hare, fur between the toes, and the ball of the foot is harder. We have seen a dog which has taken several gazelles in one season, but worth nothing the year after. I am speaking of the *red* gazelle which comes in the winter near Aleppo; the “reemee,” or white gazelle, is not so swift, and is always near Aleppo in the summer and autumn. The flesh of this last is extremely fine and fat, whereas the *red* is lean, and has a sour taste.

In May, 1813, he went with his family to Reehah, a village in the mountains between Latakia and Aleppo; and continuing his journey,

he went on to Latakia, to meet Lady Hester Stanhope, and consult Doctor Meryon, her physician ; but he had the misfortune to lose by death both his daughters *in one day*. “Latakia became of course,” he says, “a most disagreeable residence for us; and although the rains had set in, we resolved to brave all obstacles and return to Aleppo in December, since which time it has pleased God to restore us all to health ; but although I have always studiously cultivated in myself an habitual thankfulness and resignation to the will of my Creator, not only as a state of mind conducive to happiness, but as a high moral duty, my sweet Harissa had taken such hold of my affections that I cannot yet forget her animated, intelligent looks and endearing manners.”

Lady Hester Stanhope also fell very dangerously ill at the same time, and her life was despaired of. In writing to her brother, the Hon. James H. Stanhope, two years afterwards, Mr. Barker speaks of her resignation to her supposed approaching dissolution in these terms :—

“ . . . Doctor Meryon absolutely despaired

of her life, and even communicated to her the awful intelligence in my presence. It is in moments like those that, stripped of all our extrinsic worth, we pass for no more than our real value; and high as your admiration is for the great qualities of your noble sister, it would have been infinitely increased if you had seen, as I did, the fortitude and resignation with which she entertained the idea of her dissolution.

“She gave me her orders for the disposal of her effects, the payment of her servants’ wages, and certain dispositions that I was to make by writing to her friends in England, with more composure of mind than is often displayed in preparations for an ordinary journey. I took notes as I received her ladyship’s commands; and after retiring for a while, she would frequently call me back, to give me some instructions that she had forgotten, and then again would calmly say, ‘Now I really believe, Mr. Barker, I have nothing more to say.’ I have now the agreeable task to assure you that her ladyship’s health is completely re-established.”

When Lady Hester Stanhope quitted Acre for Caiffa, the Pacha gave her a magnificent

“takterawan,” a number of fine tents, and her retinue was composed of 164 persons.

Some cases of plague occurred in the spring of 1813, at Tripoli and at Damascus, but “as the season was far advanced, it was not destined to spread,” because it very rarely passes the hot weather of August. The prospect of its breaking out the next year was, however, generally acknowledged as a certainty: the prophecy was verified. “Experience has shown that when the plague is destined to make ravages in these parts, it begins by a few scattered cases in February.”

Early in April, 1814, it was general all over Syria, Smyrna, and Constantinople. The European colonies were *shut up* at Aleppo in their houses in the “Khans,” and could only communicate by the terraces. The “khans” are square buildings containing a great number of houses but only one large door, and a wicket inside it. This door was guarded night and day by some gentlemen who took it by turns to watch, so as not to allow anything whatever to be received except in water, or by fumigation, or in vinegar.

Mr. Barker writes to Isaac Morier, Esq., Her Majesty's Consul-General at Constantinople :—

“**ALEppo, 27th May, 1814.**

“... I am happy to be able to answer your kind inquiries about my health, by saying that it is at length quite re-established; I should otherwise have suffered a great deal from my present confinement on account of the plague, which is now making dreadful ravages here, at Damascus, and all over Syria. This disorder is much more contagious and violent here than it is in Constantinople. Few survive thirty-six hours after the first attack, and many die within the twenty-four hours.

“A Turkish merchant of my acquaintance, the other day, hearing that one of his friends was confined to his bed by sickness, went to see him. Before his visit was over, he fell so ill that he could not be removed, and the next day they were both carried to the grave together.

“There are many instances here of the plague carrying off in the course of a few days all the individuals of a numerous family, and the keys

of their houses being deposited in the ‘mehkameh’ (civil court).

“Being on my terrace this morning, I heard a poor woman, who was following two coffins, pathetically exclaim, ‘Three yesterday, and two to-day, is too much, O God, to bear !’

“Three or four days ago, a Turkish carpenter applied to a French merchant for the loan of thirty piasters to defray the burial expenses of his wife and children, promising in case he himself should fall a victim to the plague, that he would take care the merchant should be repaid out of the sale of his effects; and yesterday his partner came to say that, the poor man being dead, he was answerable for the money.

“While one’s fellow-creatures are suffering such dreadful calamities, it would be a sin to repine at the insignificant evils we experience from confinement to our houses, which are not only spacious and airy, but communicate by the terraces with all the dwellings of European society. Such is the efficacy of the precautions taken, that among five hundred individuals of which it is composed, hitherto, thank God, no case has occurred to disturb our tranquillity.

But the measures we take are much more rigorous than those usually practised with you. Except liquids, we consider everything as contagious ; we may be wrong in some instances, but it is erring on the safe side.

“ A remarkable novelty is, that Turkish gentlemen of Aleppo begin very generally to take the actual quarantine precautions against the plague ; which shows that prejudices, however strong, must at length give way to the influence of reason. They defend their conduct by a *Fetwah* given some years ago (in 1807) by the famous Abdallah Effendee of this city, who formed his syllogism thus :—

“ ‘ Rain is a blessing, yet we lawfully take shelter from it ; the plague is a curse ; it cannot therefore be unlawful to guard against or endeavour to avoid it.

“ ‘ The plague,’ he says, ‘ has taken off almost every Turk of whom I have the least knowledge ; or if the head of the family be still alive, the wife and children and domestics are dead.’ ”

“ The plague has happily entirely ceased here [15th August, 1814] and throughout all

Syria, but Aleppo continues to be in mourning on account of the oppression of the Governor, which has annihilated all industry, by inspiring a terror that inclines those who have any funds either to confine themselves to their houses or fly. The plague has carried off about eight thousand people, but I am confident the city has been depopulated of twice that number by the tyranny of the Pacha" [Jelall il Deen Pacha].

It was customary when the plague ceased to carry in procession a bier raised high on poles, covered with flowers, to the cemetery, which is always outside the city, and instead of wailing, and the peculiar chant of the profession of Mohammedan faith, it was accompanied by singing and rejoicing.

In a letter to the Ambassador he gives a graphic account of what may be expected of Turkish Pachas :—

“ ALEPPO, 17th August, 1814.

“ SIR,—

“ I always feel considerable reluctance in reporting to your Excellency the public trans-

actions in these parts, from the impression that it is impossible to give interest to scenes that have been acted over precisely in the same way for centuries past, as we see them acted to-day.

It is only changing Mohammed into Ali, and my reports are in no way different from those of my predecessors a hundred years ago. That there should always be rebels, and that those rebels should always ultimately fall into the power of a Government which they had long successfully contemned, is in itself sufficiently strange; but that there should be no novelty in the means used to subdue them, and no necessity for new contrivances to ensnare them, is what nothing but the profoundest knowledge of the Turkish character can enable one to conceive.

“While our Pacha was employed in laying waste the fertile district of Antioch and Beilan, Kalendee Pacha insinuated himself into Aintab, a town which has been for a long time past in the hands of a rebel faction of Janissaries. By solemn assurances he lulled them into security; till, under the old pretext of settling

the means of raising a contribution, having got the five principal men into a room together, he destroyed them, and is now carrying on the work of confiscation and proscription in exactly the same way it has been performed here.

“The pretence of assembling them was the same as that by which the eleven Aleppo chiefs were united and assassinated last year; and it will probably be made use of again next year by Baba Pacha, who has been ordered to reduce the Janissaries of Orfa, although they are thought to be much stronger and more numerous than were those of Aintab or Aleppo. But it was not from want of adequate means of defence that they fell; they were subdued by a sort of fascination that the name of the Porte still maintains over the minds of the people in this distant province, although its real power has been long extinguished. The Pachas are acting the part of decoy ducks; and the rebels blindly follow them into the snare, which everybody *but they* can see is laid for their destruction.

“It would seem the Porte confines its secret

instructions to the Pachas to this simple injunction, ‘ Go, give your own and if necessary our Imperial “Rai” [or solemn assurance of safety] to rebels ; and when they are in your power, destroy them.’

“ And although every Turk has heard from his infancy stories of the perfidy of Pachas, when he has occasion to be warned by such examples he is sure to forget them ; dazzled perhaps by the splendour that surrounds the Supreme Viziers, or dragged on by a destiny which by thinking it inevitable he renders so.

“ Among the number of those who fled on the Pacha’s entrance into Aleppo last autumn was a Janissary called Eb’n Fedawee, of very little note, although possessed of some property, which consisted chiefly in camels. He went to Damascus, where the Pacha there promoted him to the office of chief conductor of the Mecca caravan of pilgrims, and sent an express Tartar to our Pacha, who was then at Antioch, to beg that he would permit Eb’n Fedawee to come to Aleppo, for the purpose of procuring the articles necessary for the accommodation

of the pilgrims, which are chiefly water-skins and tents. Our Pacha immediately returned a most polite answer, with the strongest assurances of safety and protection, to Eb'n Fedawee, and sent him a 'Bouyourldee,' or 'safe conduct.'

"In confidence of the value of the word of a Pacha of Aleppo, given solemnly to a Pacha of Damascus, the Janissary came here forty days ago, with his family, and went quietly about fulfilling the object of his mission. Ten days ago, the Pacha returned here from the coast, when Eb'n Fedawee waited on His Excellency with presents of aloe wood, Mecca fans, etc.; and was well received, treated with the distinction of a cup of coffee, and assured of protection in all his affairs. Eb'n Fedawee was yesterday seized, thrown into the felons' prison, his camels confiscated, his wife and children cast into the street, and a seal affixed to the door of his dwelling.

"Our Pacha will not be at a loss for justification. He will say that Eb'n Fedawee was, under cover of a commission for tents, come to make a counter revolution in Aleppo; and will at the same time acquire fame for his

vigilance, a fine string of camels for himself, and some money for the Porte. Can anything be better, or more *enregle?* ”

Sir Sidney Smith writes to him at this time, though no longer commanding in the Mediterranean, speaking of a letter of accompaniment to a packet of his for India, which he had omitted to send him at the time. He says :—

“ I mention it *now* only as a proof of my not having omitted the due form of courtesy, and I may add friendship, to you, whom I have so long known and corresponded with, as an able, intelligent, and indefatigable public servant.”

Mr Barker tells the Ambassador, Sir Robert Liston, that he intends to give a great *fête* in honour of the peace signed the 1st of June at Paris, and to have the fountain he had had made playing on the occasion.

He had had a boat built by Mr. Vincent Germain, an engineer, and intended to inaugurate its first floating on the river of Aleppo (the Koïc) on that day. But when the day fixed had come, the whole population flocked in

crowds to see so novel a sight, which had never been witnessed at Aleppo; and the Pacha, fearing a revolt, sent to "the Consul to beg he would take it away as soon as possible." It floated, however, a short time.

CHAPTER X.

A Marriage at Aleppo.—Preparations.—The Bath.—The “Nakshay,” or Dyeing the Hands.—The First Dressing.—Anecdote of Hassoun’s Daughter.—The Procession.—Search for the Bridegroom.—The Dressing.—The Ceremony.—The Dinner.—The Unveiling.—Great Expenses Incurred.—Reason why Women are Secluded in Turkey.—Houses at Aleppo.—Antiquity and Beauty of the City.—Festivities.—Sword Dance.—Amusements.—“Jereed.”—Garden Parties.—A Syrian Jester.—The French Consul, Monsieur de Lesseps.—Practical Jokes by his Dragoman Geoffroy.—Friendship between Mr. Barker and Monsieur de Lesseps.—Mr. Ferdinand de Lesseps.—His Father’s Politics.—“Marriage of the Two Seas” brought about by a very Different Union.

AMONG the multifarious functions which a Consul in the Levant is called upon to perform, from a christening to a burial, may be reckoned, also, his being present at the weddings of his dragomen and native dependents, who are generally very wealthy merchants, some of them trading to India, who could load their tables with real silver plate, and set down one hundred and fifty covers.

A marriage at Aleppo, in those days, was a

very serious and protracted affair. Several weeks of preparation were required ; independent of the bride's trousseau, the items of which were sometimes commissioned in India, there were many kinds of sweetmeats, perfumes, etc., to be prepared, which could only be done at home ; and some were elaborate, and required time to be got ready; for in the highest class of Aleppo society three hundred persons would certainly be invited, every class by itself. For instance, the consular corps and the first class of European residents would be invited the first day ; and next, the high class of Mohammedans and landed proprietors. The third day, the merchants and tradesmen, both Mussulman and Christian. The fourth day, the shopkeepers and Jew brokers, and such people.

The marriage ceremony was always solemnized at the consulate of the respective nationalities by the Bishop and priests of the Greek or Roman Catholic Churches, as the case may have been ; and the ecclesiastics would afterwards adjourn to the bridegroom's house, where they would be feasted at a banquet, by themselves ; and after having smoked one or

two pipes, and partaken of coffee, they would depart; on which a signal was given for the music and dancing to begin; for before their departure, and indeed from the moment the ceremony was concluded, the big drums and fifes of the gipsy band in the street kept up an unearthly din, and nothing could be heard until that was silenced. Crowds of idlers of course blocking up the avenues to the house, and the Cawasses obliged to be at the doors to maintain order.

A week before the marriage, the bridegroom sends the bride Cashmere shawls, diamonds, pearls, and brocaded Indian stuffs.

Two days before the marriage, the bride is taken to the bath, accompanied by all her young friends; and they have a lunch in the bath, composed of boiled "cubbies," sweetmeats, and fruits; and music by women.

A professional woman, called "Maäshtha," comes in the evening, and braids her hair in an uneven number of braids, puts black antimony between the eyelids with a silver blunt bodkin called "makhally," and the black is called „kuhl;" while her hands are stained with

"hennay,"¹—a dark red colour, almost black. Thin leather leaves are cut out by a stamp in imitation of the acacia leaf, and then are laid on, over night, plastered over with the dye, made into a paste with water from a green powder, which, on being wetted, becomes a dark red. When the leather leaves and bandages are taken off in the morning, the parts of the hands which have not come in contact with the dye remain white, and a pretty impression of the leaf is printed on the hand. It was the fashion then to cut the hair *straight* across the forehead, just as has been done lately in England.

The evening before the marriage day, at about ten o'clock, the female relations of the bride dress her very simply in Indian muslin called "Aghabanee," embroidered with vegetable silk; and then she is muffled up, and veiled with a large white veil called "Eezar;" and when they hear the music which announces the arrival of the bridegroom's party, they place her in a corner of the room, with a rose-pink veil, spangled with gold and tinsel leaf,

¹ This is called the "Nakshay," or "dyeing the hands."

called “Chak-chak,” on her head, turning her face to the wall; and she is always found sobbing when the party arrives, and her young companions, seated around her, try to enliven and console her.¹

The female friends of the bridegroom, who are come to take her, do not take off their veils entirely, but sit down for a short time, and have refreshments, until the bride can be persuaded to leave, which is generally a little after midnight.

While the bride is sobbing, a professional hired woman comes and sings a ballad, in which the duties of a submissive daughter-in-law are extolled and inculcated, and some other women join her, and give out a very extraordinary ringing and piercing sound, or cry, by thrilling the tongue with great rapidity against the roof of the mouth at the same time that a piercing

¹ The daughter of Nahoom Hassoun, Mr. Barker's dragoman, came, sobbing, to kiss her father's hand before leaving, as is usual; and he said to her, “ My dear child, why should you cry? If you so wish it, we will give up this marriage, which is distasteful to you. What say you to that? Shall we, or shall we not? It all depends on you.” She replied, “ No, papa; I will cry, and go.”

cry is emitted: the sound resembles “Lee-lee, lee-lee,” and can be heard at a great distance. The hand is placed before the mouth, to hide the contortions of the muscles of the face, which are anything but pretty.

The procession now begins. First go the musicians and the torch-bearers; then the friends and relations of the bridegroom, each carrying a lighted taper in his or her hand; then the bride, supported on each side by two intimate female friends or relations, but her brothers walk behind her. She makes two steps in advance, and one back; so that a long time elapses before she reaches the bridegroom’s house, about two or three o’clock in the morning. On approaching the house, the female servants sprinkle rose and orange flower water, mixed with musk, on the party arriving, from two silver filigree bottles called “Kom-kom,” which are in every respectable house for such occasions; and also receive it—that is, the procession—with incense burning. The incense pan, called “Mabkhara,” is also of silver, covered with filigree silver made in India.

On their arrival, the bride and her party of

ladies are introduced into a room apart, where they all go to sleep on low divans, till eight o'clock in the morning, when breakfast is brought in on a large round metal tray, with a variety of cakes and coffee. At eleven o'clock the Bishop and priests come, drink sherbets and coffee, and smoke pipes; and then the bridegroom is no longer to be found, and a great search is made for him. When at last he is discovered hiding, and brought out, a combat arises between the married and unmarried young men, each party pulling him to their side, bewailing his fate. This dispute settled in favour of the former, they carry off their prize, and dress him in another room in *new* clothes: a cashmere shawl on his head, another round his waist, and a loose cloth cloak over all; and the marriage ceremony begins.

In Mohammedan circles the same ceremonies are gone through, with this difference, that the bride and ladies are never seen at all, and the marriage rite is performed by the writing of a contract by the Mollah, or priest; and it is on that occasion *only*, when the bridegroom is introduced to see his bride, and passes through

the courtyard, which is always full of women, who immediately cover their heads with a hand-kerchief,—*then*, but at no other time, can men be present when women are assembled:

After the ceremony is over, and the priests have dined, and that sumptuously, smoked and drank; coffee is handed round,—which is a hint that they are to go; and then the bride is taken by her own relations into a room, where she is dressed in a fine bridal dress, with jewels, and the pink gauze veil is put over her face and head. The bridegroom is then permitted to take off the veil with the point of a sword, when he sees her for the first time in his life; and it sometimes happens that he makes a wry face, and then his mother and aunt come round him, and console him by extolling the virtues of the bride, and telling him that her face is swollen by crying, and that she is worried and fatigued by so much ceremony for three days, and that it will be all right. Every bride has a large long chest, generally of carved oak, such as used to be in old mansions in England.

The music and dancing is kept up till mid-

night; the bride is placed standing, covered with the pink rose veil, in the corner of the room on the divan; and whenever any guest comes in, she is led by the hand of a newly-married lady to kiss the hand of the newcomer, walking on pattens a foot high, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and ornaments of silver hanging from them; and the straps are sometimes embroidered with pearls, and gold on velvet where the strap passes over the instep, so that she could not steady herself if she were not supported by some one.

It was always the custom at weddings for the gentlemen to be helped first. We remember having been invited to the marriage of a Christian gentleman called "Azrak" (Blue), when the uncle of the bridegroom objected that the ladies should be helped before the gentlemen, saying, "It has always been the custom in our country that the gentlemen be helped first." We perceived that the ladies blushed as well as the bride. Generally, however, European customs are prevailing, and the marriages nowadays are sometimes less ceremonious, and are called

“Frank marriages.” The seventh day after the marriage, called “S’bou,” the relations of the bride and other friends, come to visit her; and then the festivities begin all over again. Wine is passed round, with half an apple, pared, stuck on the edge of the glass tumbler; sweetmeats, refreshments, dinners, suppers; so that the feasting would not be over till the fourteenth day, and sometimes a month,—as occurred at Latakia in 1847, when the Governor, a rich landed proprietor, married his son to the daughter of a Pacha of Damascus.

The consumption of tobacco for the pipes, toombak for the “nargheelys” (hookahs), and sherbet, lemonade, candied fruit, syrups, orgeat, etc., which would be kept up during all the time, without intermission, was equal to a whole year’s consumption. Indeed, so much was spent at marriages that the parties incurred debts which could not be paid off for a year or two, and the Patriarchs and Bishops were obliged to prohibit strictly such extravagance, and fix a number of days, and sum of money as the maximum allowed.

The houses at Aleppo, which, before the earthquake in 1822, was the finest city in the Turkish Empire, are built in the form of a square, with high walls all round, from the circumstance of the Mohammedan objection to permit their women to be seen, because it is a strict tenet of their religion that the “heads of females must be covered;” which their founder Mohammed meant to refer to modesty, for the Arab women never cover their faces, nor do the Turkman women either. Seclusion of women is not a tenet of the Mohammedan religion; but as from time immemorial the rich and powerful in the East have always adopted this practice (long before Mohammed), the commentators on the Koran have chosen to take the passage above referred to in the sense their rulers wished them to take it.

All the windows of the house look into the courtyard, or courtyards (for there may be more than one), except when there are no houses near, and even then a special permission has to be obtained from the Kadee, if the neighbours make any objection. These

courts are paved, sometimes with marbles of different colours in pretty mosaic designs; and all the stone fret-work of the windows is ornamented with sculptured Arabesque patterns, generally every one differing from the other; there are two or three jets of water playing opposite the high open arched recess called "Leewaän," elevated above the level of the court with divans, and cushions for reclining on in hot weather. This "Leewaän" is always built facing the north, for shade during the day. Shrubs, orange-trees, and flowers fill up the beds around the fountains, which are watered by these last. Staircases from the *outside* lead up to the bedrooms, and sometimes these are prettily carved and ornamented.

In the house known by the name of "Housh Sader," belonging to a Christian family, the left-hand bedroom is beautifully ornamented, and the ceiling painted and gilded in the Persian style. An English gentleman, a Member of Parliament, remained several weeks taking copies, and declared it even surpasses the Alhambra in Spain.

Every window has shutters carved in the

most elaborate Arabesque designs, and the window-sill, in coloured mosaic marbles, corresponds with the design of each.

It is said the artists, who were sent for from Persia expressly, remained eight months painting the ceiling alone. The eye is never weary of looking at the variety of the work it rests upon, and the colours appear as fresh as if just finished, although more than a hundred years have elapsed since they were put on. The blue ultramarine is peculiarly brilliant. There are other houses and palaces, equally well decorated, though the hand of Time is telling on the old city, which is still one of the best built in Turkey, having had the advantage of having marble quarries within a mile of the walls, so that even the streets are paved with the commoner kinds of marble.

Covered sewers run under every street, into which the drains of the houses converge; and the streets are so arranged as to slope to the main sewers, and these are carried off below the city,—evincing a high state of civilization more than a thousand years ago, when Europe was plunged in darkness and barbarism. The

high *square* minaret of the great mosque has stood many earthquakes since the first Crusade, when it was built, for it was originally the belfry of the Church of St. John, before the city fell into the hands of the Saracens.

In summer time, when the marriages generally take place, the courtyards are illuminated at night with different coloured lamps, and nightingales in cages are hired and placed among the shrubs and trees, which sing at intervals when the music ceases. The dazzling diamonds of the ladies, and the various colours of their dresses, the lights, the singing of the birds, and the trickling of the water falling on the marble basins, make one fancy it to be Fairyland.

The only drawback to this illusion is the vociferations of the Arab musicians, the most noted of whom, Hanna Aächek-Bawsh, puts his right hand on his ear, and leaning his head on that side, sings for hours, at the top of his voice, Arabic poetical pieces from “Antar” and other poems ; for the Arab races are eminently poetical. The “Mow-wall” is a recital in song of the best poets, and to those who understand

it must be very exciting and agreeable ; but to Europeans, who do not understand a word, it is a fearful deafening uproar.

Besides the usual dance, there is sometimes a sword dance, both by men and women, which is very graceful. The sword is held by the blade with a handkerchief wrapped round it. And during the whole time sweetmeats and refreshments are passed round by the attendants, consisting of sherbets composed of syrup of roses, syrup of violets, syrup of cherries, orgeat, lemonade, liqueurs, sugar plums, rahetlahalkoom, etc. ; and following them come all sorts of Oriental cakes, differing from those in Europe.

The bride keeps the pink veil on for seven days, which is worn over the head, and not over the face.

Besides the marriage feasts, the pastimes and amusements consist of shooting, coursing, and garden parties ; these last are peculiarly favoured by the climate, which is fine for whole months during the summer and autumn.

The Turks are fond of playing the “Jereed,” which is a game of throwing sticks at one

another on horseback, principally to exercise and show off their horses.

The sport of shooting is confined to partridge during July and August, and rarely half September, when the birds become too wild. Woodcocks afford good sport in the winter, and quails in the spring and autumn; they are plentiful for a month at a time, during the "passage." Doves arrive in innumerable "flights" in May, and give excellent practice from their great rapidity of motion.

Coursing hares and gazelles takes place during the winter, when the rains soften the hard ground, and the gazelle's pointed hoofs sink into the soft soil, and the greyhounds, which are of the Persian breeds, then have an advantage over them.

The confinement by being shut up in dull houses walled in all round induces a longing for the fresh air of the gardens, and the whole population, both Mohammedan, Christian, and Israelite, flock to them *daily*. Picnics are much in vogue, and large parties assemble by invitation, where music (but no dancing), story-telling, smoking, coffee and refreshments are

the methods resorted to for killing time, which generally hangs heavy on the hands of Orientals.

Sometimes a few come together to discuss some particular business, free from interruption ; sit by the river-side, where no eaves-droppers can be concealed ; and, what is more general perhaps than all, rendezvous are given, and the ladies' faces can then be uncovered, and the surveillance of the "duennas" cannot be so strict.

The "Aians," or rich landed proprietors and Members of the Council, frequently go to the gardens of an afternoon, and take with them a jester or story-teller, either Turk or Christian, who recites poetry, and is generally a wit.

At one of these parties a large basket of oranges was brought, and the jester was ordered by them to distribute.

"How," said he, "will you have the partition made ? By the distribution of God, or by that of men ?" One of the nobles answered, "By the first." "Very well," said the jester ; "as you please."

He placed the basket before him, began to

peel, and eat himself. "Oh!" cried they all together, "this is fine distribution!" "Wait," said he, "have patience, and you shall see." After having eaten two oranges, and put by several more without the rinds, he gathered the peels together, and set them aside. He then gave half a dozen to one person, only one to another, and all the peels to a third. "Oh!" they all exclaimed, "what is this?" "You would have," he said, "God's distribution: to some He gives a great deal, and very little to others, but to all He gives something. Blessed be His name! I am satisfied with my share of His gifts." "I daresay you are," they said. "No, no, begin afresh, and give us in the other manner."

Then he divided among them the oranges equally; but he refused absolutely to alter the distribution he had made in his own favour, saying, "Since it is not to be according to God's dotation, it is but just that I should be benefited in the same way as you all; for I am the *one* here the least favoured by God's gifts, and therefore I ought to have a larger share, in order to be placed on an equality with

you." They all clapped their hands in approbation, and each gave him an orange besides.

On one occasion, when Monsieur de Lesseps, father of Monsieur Ferdinand de Lesseps, was Consul at Aleppo at the same time as Mr. Barker, his sons Theodore and Jules, with the assistance of Monsieur Geoffroy, cancellier and dragoman of the Consulate, resolved to play off a joke on their parent the Consul. Monsieur Geoffroy pretended to have business which called him away, and obtained leave to absent himself. A letter was written as if from the part of a new Pacha who had just arrived at Aleppo, inviting the French Consul to a garden party. A number of persons were hired to represent the Pacha's guards and retinue. Mr. Geoffroy personated the Pacha, and played his part to such perfection that Monsieur de Lesseps had not the least suspicion, and ordered vails to be given to the Pacha's servants.

Another of the dragomans of the Consulate officiated as interpreter, and he was equally deceived. Pipes and coffee were gone through, and compliments exchanged, and conversation

carried on in Turkish ; the two sons, young men, all the time sitting by, and stuffing handkerchiefs into their mouths, to prevent their bursting out. Ferdinand, the originator of the Suez Canal, was then in France for his education. When, the next day, the story went all over the town, and it came to his ears, from a friend to whom he was relating and extolling the Pacha's affability and politeness, he was excessively angry, and put them all *aux arrêts*, “ and bread and water for three days.”

At another time, Monsieur de Lesseps, who was a strict disciplinarian, had ordered that women should not be allowed to come to the Consulate on any pretence whatever, on account of the wearisome importunities of females,—a great source of annoyance in the East, for they come to beg off culprits who deserve punishment,—Mr. Geoffroy put on an “ eezar,” or white veil, which covers the whole body, and placed himself where the Consul could get a glimpse of him ; and as soon as he saw he had been perceived, he pretended to hide as if in confusion, and slipping into another room, passed on to the terrace, and then jumping

on to a low wall, let himself down into the street, a height of about eight or ten feet.

Monsieur de Lesseps called the two Cawasses who are always standing at the door of Consulates, and with great pomp and severity ordered the woman to be expulsed. The Cawasses looked everywhere, but no woman could be found. In the midst of the search, Monsieur Geoffroy, who had put on the veil again, came in and said, "It is I;" for he knew the Consul's indignation would have been visited upon the Cawasses. Again, *aux arrêts*, with "bread and water for three days."

We must not omit to say that Monsieur de Lesseps, senior, was Mr. Barker's shooting companion for some time; but when he saw that his friend was so "vif" that he frequently shot away his ramrod, and finished by shooting away two fingers of his right hand, Mr. Barker thought it more prudent to give him a wide berth. They were always very great friends; and this intimacy continued between Mr. Ferdinand de Lesseps and the writer of these pages at Alexandria in 1832, where we were both then just entering the public service of

our respective countries. We were indebted to him for a famous pointer, the father and mother of which had come out of Charles X.'s kennel ; for his father, then Consul-General at Tunis, was one of the King's greatest partisans ; which circumstance threw him under a cloud during the First Empire and the subsequent Orleanist domination. When Napoleon III. married his wife's niece, the sky cleared, and the sun of fortune smiled again on the family. There can be little doubt that we owe the Suez Canal in great measure to this marriage. A scheme of this nature might never have been possible under either a Royalist or a Republican *régime*. A work which had baffled great potentates during centuries required the strong support of autocratic rule and the mysterious fear inspired by the revived empire in Europe, to carry out so unpromising a measure, and overcome opposition. This is no derogation to the merits of Monsieur de Lesseps ; for great events often spring from trifling causes, and in this case the "marriage of the two seas" was brought about by another and a seemingly fortuitous union.

CHAPTER XI.

Lady Hester Stanhope writes to Mr. Barker on her Financial Affairs.—Her Love of Horses.—Her Idea of what a Minister should be.—Her Trip to Palmyra.—Mr. Rich and his Journey to Palmyra.—She regrets Lord Tyrconnel's Death.—The Duke of York.—The Horse Lady Hester sent him.—Her Advice to Mr. Barker about his Health.—Thinks she could Direct an Army.—Beaudin her Dragoman.—Mr. Barker's Fever.—His Generosity and Delicate Manner of Acting.—Exemplified in a Letter to Mr. Bruce.—Lady Hester's Troubles with her Servants.—Her Brother's Wound.—Damascus Blades.—Old Armour found in Aleppo Castle.

IN the autumn of 1812, Lady Hester Stanhope, who had arrived in Palestine accompanied by the Hon. Michael Bruce, wrote to Mr. Barker to negotiate bills of exchange for her account. She had met the Hon. Frederick North (afterwards Lord North) in her travels, who spoke so very highly of the hospitality and kind attentions shown him by Mr. Barker at Aleppo, where he spent some time in his house, that her ladyship applied to him in preference to the British merchants at Beyrouth, a town so much nearer

to her residence, which was then Damascus, than Aleppo, which is six hundred miles off. Mr. Bruce had written to him for the same purpose, and he replied as follows:—

“ALEPPO, 4th Sept., 1812.

“SIR,—

“I had this morning the honour to receive your obliging letter of the 11th August, accompanying your draft on me in favour of Youssouf Boghoz, correspondent here of Gebraeel Adjouree, for 700 altlik,¹ which, although payable on eleven days after sight, was discharged the instant of its presentation, for the honour of your signature.

“I hope you will do me the justice to believe that your bills on me to any amount within my power to pay, would have met a similar fate, without the guarantee of Messrs. Wilkinson & Sons of Smyrna. The respectability of your own name, or of that of your noble fellow-traveller, was sufficient to authorize an application to me for assistance in your pecuniary need at Acre and Joonee; and I am

¹ Silver coin representing six piasters.

surprised, when your letters of credit on Boulad at Beyrouth failed you, that you did not without loss of time remit me a bill on your banker in London, and direct its amount to be sent you in Syria to the different stages of your journey.

“As it is, I fear I can contribute very little towards the supply of your and Lady Hester Stanhope’s immediate wants, not knowing what means her ladyship may have employed to procure money on quitting Dayre il Kammar, or after her arrival at Damascus. Under such circumstances, the only means in my power of facilitating your obtaining the necessary supplies at Damascus, Homs, Hamah, Tripoli, and Acre, are to enclose you herewith letters to my correspondents at those places, by which they will be assured that whatever bills you or Lady Stanhope may value on me in their favour, will be punctually discharged, and which would answer your purpose very well.”

Mr. Barker had written also to Lady Hester in regard to her application, and received the following letter:—

"DAMASCUS, 10th Sept., 1812.

"SIR,—

"I acknowledge with pleasure your very, very obliging letter of the 28th August, and it gives me great satisfaction to make the acquaintance of a person so highly respected in this part of the world. I find it is quite out of the question to procure money here upon Constantinople, therefore I must take the liberty of drawing upon you before very long. The Jew has promised to look out for persons who want bills for that place; but I fancy I shall only get his answer to-morrow night, therefore I can enter into no further detail than that Messrs. Coutts and Co. are my bankers, and that, first and last, I shall want about £800 or £1,000. In return for the news you were so good as to send me, I shall communicate to you that which I may receive from England, when my letters arrive from Smyrna, where they have been detained owing to the plague. Allow me to say that if you knew as much of Mr. Perceval's character as I do, you would not lament his death, as he has shed some of the best blood of his country for no earthly pur-

pose, and squandered her treasures without common sense.

“ I remain, Sir,
“ Your obedient humble Servant,
“ HESTER LUCY STANHOPE.”

Her ladyship writes again on the same subject :—

“ DAMASCUS, 17th Sept., 1812.

“ SIR,—

“ The Jews informed me this morning that it would be positively necessary that you should send them either good bills upon this place, or money in specie to the amount of £1000 (which is the sum I want), for that it cannot be procured here. They have, however, civilly offered me what I may want for the present, but they say only as a *loan* from a *friend*, as they wish their name to be entirely kept out of money transactions. This is for your private ear—you as well as myself can guess *why*. The bills or money they have allowed to be addressed to them to place in other hands, but only for the reason of my having less trouble with strangers ; besides, they are to find

means of procuring me credit with the Arabs, of whom I may buy horses in the desert without taking the money with me. I enclose you bills upon my bankers, Messrs. Coutts and Co., and I hope you will have the goodness to arrange this money concern in the best way you can quickly, as I do not wish to lose much more time here.

“ You would very much oblige me if you would have copied some of the most important parts of Taplin, relative to the most common disorders of horses—coughs, colds, inflammation of the bowels, fever, and heats. Or if you could spare me the book for a short time without inconvenience, it would be still better. Wood’s ‘Palmyra’ is too valuable a work for me to wish to borrow it; but I am equally obliged to you for the offer of it. Mr. Bruce will tell you that I love horses to as great a degree as my grandfather, Lord Chatham; and am as difficult about their qualifications as I am about those of a Minister. It is of little consequence to a country that a Minister should pay his weekly bills if he squander the treasure of a nation and reduce others to poverty. Whether he loves or whether he beats his wife appears

to me also to be alike uninteresting ; and every step I take in this country teaches me the more to despise the ignorance and want of energy of those who govern at home. But I must not longer intrude upon your time with political opinions, which perhaps will at first shock you, but after a time you will see things in a different light.

“ I remain, Sir,

“ Your obedient humble Servant,

“ HESTER LUCY STANHOPE.”

Some months elapsed before Lady Stanhope wrote again. Mr. Bruce went to Aleppo, and stayed some time there. Winter came on, and in the spring the correspondence between her ladyship and Mr. Barker was renewed. She writes :—

“ HAMMAH, March 20th, 1813.

“ DEAR SIR,—

“ The sight of your handwriting gave me great pleasure, as it enables me to thank you for all your kindness and attention to me during the winter; when I believed you were very unwell, I would not write lest you should

have to put yourself to any inconvenience in answering my letter. To-morrow I hope we shall be off to Palmyra. I leave Giorgio here, and to him you may direct and entrust anything during our absence. A present for Mollah Ismäel is what I much stand in need of. He has been more than civil towards us. Do you think you could procure a respectable sword, and have it smartened up to look quite grand? If you can, pray send it here; also a common one for forty or fifty piasters, for Chief Nasser, figged out a little. I hope you will have had to continue your researches about a bathing woman; one who has served Turkish women I should like best, for I vastly dislike Christians and their customs. Poor Monsieur Beaudin¹ grows red and pale by turns when I abuse them. He is quite their champion, as well as that of all other Consuls. When he speaks of *them*, he only, I suppose, thinks of you. We have had a sad winter, and I have suffered much from it; but I hope I shall be able to accomplish my long-intended journey somehow or other. I trust we shall all meet in the course of five or six weeks;

¹ Her French dragoman, quite a lad.

but let me hear another time if I am to be left out on account of the war. I rather fancy I should make the best figure of all amongst Turkish soldiers.

“I remain, dear Sir,

“Yours sincerely,

“HESTER LUCY STANHOPE.”

“P.S.—Pray send the sword, if to be got, as soon as you can. A large heavy one I should think Nasser would like. A pair of good English or French pistols would also do for the Aga.”

Her ladyship went to Palmyra, and then to Tripoli, and writes from Latakia :—

“LATAKIA, 28th May, 1813.

“DEAR SIR,—

“Hearing at Hammah that you were again indisposed, I shall not trouble you, as I had intended, with an account of our extraordinary journey into the desert; hoping, notwithstanding, to meet you at this place, and have it in my power to describe what was most interesting. I cannot advise you what to recommend to Mr. Rich,¹ whom I rather wish to

¹ Consul-General and Resident at Bagdad for the Hon. the East India Company.

know, believing him to be the same man whom a very great personage [the Duke of Cambridge] proposed to introduce to me eight years ago, describing him as an odd but clever man ; which offer I declined, saying I knew already too many clever men. He should be careful, however, how he undertakes a journey to Palmyra, unless he goes in the guise of a poor traveller ; otherwise he will have reason to repent his want of prudence, and besides, he will be so tormented that he will be unable either to see or enjoy half what he might otherwise do, if he had previously gained all necessary information about the different characters he will have to deal with. I wish not to dictate to him, only think it right to give him this hint, particularly as he has his wife with him. If she have as much talent as her father, she will certainly not be in *his way* ; yet she may feel alarms which might be as well avoided, and besides, be put to great inconvenience. I thank you much for the trouble you have given yourself about a bath-woman ; but I fear that she will not do, as it is improbable that a woman who has been used to gaiety will ever be contented under what she will deem

confinement. Therefore I think I had better give her up. The public news you sent me is wonderful. I hardly know how to believe it ; but to think of Russia makes me melancholy. Poor dear Lord Tyrconnel ! he was one of my brother's dearest friends, and the best, the kindest-hearted of human beings. His death will very much affect the Duke of York, who was very fond of him. In a letter which I received from His Royal Highness while at Hammah, I find that the Egyptian horse I sent him pleased him extremely. Pray keep up your spirits about your health ; I think your illness has been quite misunderstood, and if you were properly treated you would be well in a fortnight. By the lowness, which has been hanging over you for so long a time, I should suppose the liver and spleen to be rather affected, and that a blister upon your side would do you great good ; but if adopted in the common way, would torment you too much in the hot weather. I learnt to dress blisters in Italy, the only country where they are understood ; and wonderful are their effects if well managed, with the assistance of proper cooling drink and diet.

Beaudin can tell you if I could not direct the march of an army, and all with such order; I hate confusion, bustle, and noise. He thinks me, I know, the devil; but so much the better. It would have been lucky for him had he met with a few more like me in the world, for he is so inactive, so confused, and so slow! But as he is willing, and good-natured, and honest, I hope at last to make something of him, and trust you will think him improved. The bull-headed cook you sent us is going away—to his country,¹ as he says. The people in this part of the world are the greatest bores I ever knew. At Cairo they are infinitely better—great rascals, but quick and agreeable. With best wishes for your health,

“I remain, dear Sir,

“Yours sincerely,

“HESTER L. STANHOPE.”

Mr. Barker at this time had from time to

¹ Almost all the cooks in Syria are Armenians who come from Arabkeer, a small town in Armenia, in the district of Van, near Mount Ararat, and come to serve two or three years, when they return to their wives and children in their own country.

time returns of "his fever." It is a received opinion in the Levant that a "fever" caught in the autumn can only be got rid of in the end of the following spring. Over-fatigue had knocked him up, and on his return to Aleppo, he kept his bed four days, and had three paroxysms of fever and ague; but on the 4th May, 1813, he writes he was quite well. "The fever came and went as usual" till the end of spring, in April.

On the 9th of February he writes to Mr. Bruce, in referring to an act of benevolence, by which he had sent £50 to a Mr. Pearce, at Mr. Bruce's suggestion:—

"I have executed your wishes with respect to the pecuniary assistance to Mr. P., as you will see by the annexed copy of my letter to him, which I hope you will approve. The subject is extremely delicate, and you will on due reflection, I trust, perceive the necessity of my having no partner in that act of beneficence. You must therefore permit me to relieve you from your guarantee of the sum I have ordered Malagamba to hold at Mr. P.'s disposal. A gentleman who was long in habits of great

intimacy with you, and who still appears not to have forfeited your friendship, cannot be unworthy of my best offices. If he repay me the 1,000 piasters, well and good; if it should never be in his power to do so, why, the consciousness of having done a proper thing, a kind of semi-official duty, will always be worth £50. Lascaris¹ bothered Mr. North with *ses griefs contre moi*. I hope you will have convinced him, in some of his lucid intervals, of my entire innocence."

Lady Hester returned to Palestine, and writes to Mr. Barker from Saida :—

"SAIDA, 7th Feb., 1814.

"DEAR SIR,—

"My health is much improved, but my recovery has been retarded by the anxiety of my mind, and the trouble and fatigue I have had with household affairs. I have not heard a word of Bruce since he left Aleppo, which makes me miserable;² and your silence also

¹ I shall have to speak further on who Lascaris was, and what he did.

² Lady Hester Stanhope was very partial to her young friend Mr. Bruce, and perhaps she loved him as much as she ever

alarms me much, as I fear you are ill; but I hope shortly to be made easy upon that subject. That fellow A. Bertrand has spread everywhere that I must die, and for that reason totally neglected to make any preparations for my return to the convent. It rains into almost all the rooms; the copper cauldron of the bath was full of holes, and consequently the water ran out, and all the work to do all over again, which has obliged me to remain in a bad lodging in this town till now; but in a few days I hope to get up to Abra. Ever since you left Latakia, Beaudin has been ill, and totally incapable of serving me in any way; he has no one merit but not being a thief, like most of the people around me; but from ignorance he allows me to be cheated, and there is so much waste, and everything allowed to go to rack and ruin, that it is about the same thing

loved any one. He was a very handsome and fascinating man and was desperately in love with her; but her good sense enabled her to see the difference of age, and the ineligibility of such an union, and she insisted on his continuing his travels; and when she found him postponing from day to day his departure, she had all the preparations made for it in secret, and obliged him to mount his horse and leave. Her affection for him is easily to be seen in all her letters.

to those who employ him, whether the money goes into his pocket or into that of other people. I have been obliged to take another dragoman, as I could not do without one. If he could write French, he might be a sort of secretary, but his French is so infamous, and so vulgar, that I should be ashamed of it ; it is only just fit for a Greek Consul, or some such person. I hope you do not think me ill-natured towards the young man, but I cannot pay in this way for trash, nor would anybody but Bruce have ever thought of it. My cousin, Mr. Wynne (his brother is called King of Wales), gave his dragoman 120 piasters per month, and he fed himself whenever Mr. Wynne came to a great town. This man went to market and ran about like a servant all day, yet had four pelisses, and wore a handsome shawl on his head, and looked ten times more a gentleman than Beaudin. Lord Sligo gave £30 a year to his dragoman, and clothes,—who spoke eight languages, four well, and four well enough for the purpose of passing through a country. If these great men pay thus, how ridiculous for me to pay as I have done ; besides, I cannot afford it for a

man as little useful as Beaudin. I write this in detail, knowing you are interested about him, and I also wish him well because he is honest; but one must be something more than that to get on in this country. I shall keep on my present dragoman for three months, and let Beaudin (if he stays) only try to learn by looking at others, and take care of his own health, which his natural idleness has ruined.

“Now I have said enough for you to understand clearly my intentions, and I would trouble you to write to the young man and give him the advice you think most to his interest.

“The plague is said to have begun again at Beyrouth, and every one expects it here in the spring. Write me a letter yourself, and make some of your people write a long one full of news. Pray also send me the description of the preparation for swords which you promised me, and the name of the earth found in Lebanon which is used for the working of the gun-barrels, and all the other little curious things we talked about before my illness. But do not *retard* the messenger much, as I am anxious to hear from you, and if you have heard of

Bruce indirectly. The plague being very bad at Constantinople alarms me very much for him ; pray write and send in future any letter of importance by *express* messenger : it is better to be ruined than to die of the fidgets. I trust your little boy has quite recovered his good looks by this time, and that the rest of your family are well. Pray make them my compliments, and believe me,

“ Dear Sir,

“ Yours sincerely,

“ H. L. STANHOPE.”

“ P.S.—It rains so fast that I am obliged to shut up the room, so that I can scarcely see.”

Her next letter is dated,

“ THE CONVENT OF ABRA,

“ March 14th, 1814.

“ MY DEAR SIR,—

“ Your packet of letters which arrived on the 27th of February was of the greatest consolation to me, as they gave me tidings of Bruce’s safe arrival at Constantinople, and of my dearest brother’s recovery from a most dangerous wound he had received ; I mean to say

that all danger was over; he was in England for advice, and it will most probably be six months or a year before the ball comes away. The Marquis of Buckingham was fortunately at his cottage in the Isle of Wight when he landed, and took the greatest care of him for some time; he is the gem of the Grenville family. A few days ago I had another packet of letters, written by the various friends of my brother after he was wounded; Sir T. Graham, even after a battle, was kind enough to spare a little moment to relieve my anxiety. The plague is now at Acre, and at Beyrouth, and in a village five hours off; I have therefore provisioned myself for six months, and built a wall round my convent. Communication with Aleppo will probably in future be so difficult that I send you another bill to repay you for what you may hereafter lay out for me, and for some things, as well as a piece of Aleppo stuff I wish to order for the Duchess of Richmond, who is come to England. Beaudin is better, and was not only contented with my proposals, but said, ‘Only allow me to stay with you, if you do not give me anything.’ I shall take great care of his

health, and pains with his education, which has been sadly neglected. Giorgio is worth ten of him, though five years younger. General Maitland has laid himself and his palace and government at my feet; a nephew of his (one of the finest fellows in the world, who was lost at sea) was once one of my greatest friends.

"I inclose a bit of Aleppo stuff; I should wish the Duchess's gown to be of that pattern and quality, but the *ground* to be of a beautiful dark green, very lively in hue, but rather deep in colour. The piece must make eight yards English, of yard wide stuff, and six piques¹ of trimming—green, gold, and red mixed—thus wide, and eight piques of narrow thus wide, according to the Arab pique.

"Sir J. Bankes, I find, is charmed with my expedition into the desert. I have got four of the fish²—the 'odd' fish you mentioned—to send him, but with *infinite trouble*. Don't forget about the teeth,³ and the swords and gunbarrels

¹ The "pique," or "peek," is an Arab measure, equal to twenty-seven inches English.

² This refers to petrified fish found there.

³ Referring to gilt lambs' teeth, which are met with in Aleppo and other parts of Syria.

in particular—the name of the clay and the place it comes from; and an Aleppo shawl for the waist, like what Bruce bought, but not too large. I don't like a white one; yellow or any other colour will do. Care must be taken to make a strong contrast in the green of the ground, and of the flowers if the ground is dark, which I wish to be light Turkish green. In great haste, having written so much already that I am quite tired,

“I remain, etc.”

Lady Hester had the affliction to hear of the death of her sister, Lady Taylor, who had left six children; but at the same time she heard of the extraordinary promotion of her brother James, who at the age of twenty-five was Lieut.-Colonel, and *aide-de-camp* to the Duke of York.

The “swords and gunbarrels” her ladyship wished to have was a description of the method by which the “watering”—that is, giving that wave appearance—is effected, and the “composition” of the swords themselves. Mr. Barker sent her the instructions requisite for the “watering” operation, but the method of com-

posing the famous Damascus blades is lost. The only thing that is known is that they were made from *aerolites* and *lumps* of this metal,— showing from their form that they had been cast in moulds, which have been from time to time (and I believe are still) found, and from which there is not the least doubt these blades were forged.

When Ibraheem Pacha of Egypt took possession of the Castle at Aleppo, many of these “lumps” were found there, much old armour, and a large warehouse quite full of arrows which had lain there from the time before gunpowder was invented. These “lumps” were recognised not only from tradition, but also from records which exist referring to them; but the method of making use of them and forging them into swords has been lost.

CHAPTER XII.

St. Simon Stylites.—Koord Boys catching Birds.—A Koord Heroine.—Anecdote of Lord Chatham and the Lords of the Admiralty.—General Maitland's Offer.—Lady Hester expects to Find a Treasure.—Sir Sidney Smith.—His Affair with the Emeer Besheer.—His Extraordinary Marriage.—Lady Hester disapproves of a Foreign Army entering Paris.—Advises Mr. Barker to collect Arab Tales for Publication.—Reliable Information of the Massacre by Buonaparte of Prisoners of War at Jaffa.—Gossip at Constantinople.

A BOUT this time Mr. Barker went to the ruins of St. Simon Stylite's Monastery, situated to the north-west of Aleppo, between Danah and Aleppo, built in honour of the saint, who is said to have lived thirty-three years on a pillar placed on the highest point of a high hill two hours' ride from Souedeeah; from which elevation he could see Antioch on one side and the sea on the other. Gibbon and other writers say he came down only once in the course of these thirty-three years, when the Bishop or Patriarch of Antioch commanded him. The base of the pillar is cut out of the rock, but the pillar itself, together with the monastery and

church, fell down in an earthquake more than eight hundred years ago. The place we are now speaking of was a much larger monastery, built in the sixth century in honour of this saint, ruined at the same time by the great earthquake above mentioned.

Here Mr. Barker saw "a very ingenious method adopted by the Koord boys for catching little birds. They tie a grub from a wasp's nest, or any other insect of the same size, to a horse-hair five and a half inches long, to the other end of which they affix a dried goat or sheep's dung. As soon as the bird has swallowed the bait, and begins to fly, they pursue him until the horse-hair hanging down twists two or three times round his wings, and brings him to the ground an easy prey."

He saw also "the house of the famous Koord heroine, the late Haissa Khatoon [Mistress Eve], who died the previous year (1813), after having governed with great credit for twenty years the whole Koord nation, who inhabit the mountains in that neighbourhood. She was left, when young and very handsome, the widow of their chief, and maintained the authority of her

deceased husband till her death." He saw "the tomb of one of her servants, who fell the victim of his temerity in making her an amorous overture. She, like all the Koords, rode always armed with a sabre and a brace of pistols at her girdle. The unfortunate man was one day, while assisting her to mount her horse, tempted to make a declaration of his love by pressing her hand, and was instantly shot through the head for his presumption."

In a letter to Lady Hester Stanhope, dated 16th January, 1815, Mr. Barker says:—

" . . . I have heard indirectly that Mr. Bruce had left Vienna on his way to Paris, and that Sir Sidney Smith is at Vienna giving to the Sovereigns of Europe there assembled philanthropic plans for compelling the *Turks* to establish *Lazarettos* in their dominions.

" I enclose a bit of the mineral earth employed in renewing the 'jiohar,' or watering, of Persian and Damascus blades your ladyship asks for. It is called in Turkish 'zagħ,' and in the Arabic of Beyrout 'shay-eere.' It appears to me from its taste to be strongly impregnated with vitriol and alum.

"I have as yet been able to find only two tolerable tiger-skins, which I should have sent in the same parcel with the Turkman carpet if I had not perceived that one was wet.

"I had a few days ago occasion to write to Mr. Bruce, when I gave him the news of your ladyship's welfare up to the 1st inst., which I had the pleasure to learn from Doctor Meryon. *Apropos* of the Doctor having sent me Russell's book on the plague, I found in the leaves of it a paper on which he had written what appears to me to be the exordium to an amatory epistle—

'My worth eclipsed by brilliancy like thine,
When thou com'st forth the sun has ceased to shine.'

"Supposing, therefore, that he found it difficult to go on in a strain of equal elevation, after having electrified my mind with a just idea of the object of his adoration I sent him back the paper with the following lines in continuation, which I hope your ladyship will think have kept up the sublimity of the Doctor's stanza :—

'And rolling planets in allotted spheres
At sight of thee conceal their drooping ears ;
While blazing comets in eccentric rings
Avoid the lustre that thy presence brings.

Lost in the splendour of thy laurel sprigs
The ancient glory of their flaming wigs,
Old Milky Way himself shall paler grow,
And wonder that his lamps no longer glow.'

"I have the honour to be, etc.,

"Your most obedient humble Servant,

"JOHN BARKER."

Her ladyship writes to him :—

"MAR ELIAS, Feb. 7th, 1815.

"... I cannot sufficiently thank you for what you wrote me upon a subject so interesting to me. I have much to say when we meet, upon the very point you mention. I knew all you have told me, and much more; yet it is all useful, very useful, therefore *all* you hear in conversation, do write to me, because it gives me an opportunity to compare it with my own information, and leads also to the discovery of lies; but I have been so prudent and *close* about this business. My grandfather, with the most open of characters and most noble of minds, was always *close* in affairs at least, for even when he gave orders for a fleet to sail, he did not allow the Lords of

the Admiralty to read the orders, but doubled down the paper, and desired them to sign their names. Do tell me a little about your brothers and their affairs. I have not had a line from General Maitland, in answer to my recommendation of your brother Edward; but I do not believe it to be rudeness, for he offered to send me a frigate from Malta whenever I chose to write for one; but want of conveyance and a vast deal of business I suppose is the reason of his silence.

"I propose being at Antioch the end of May, but as I only come to see you and Mr. Maseyk, I shall not make a long stay; nor do I wish to go here and there to see sights which are become rather indifferent to me. I wish to come in a very quiet way, not to spend much money in 'honours,' which bore me to death, and which I have had enough of. I shall bring but very few people with me, as I shall leave the rest to make a general packing up, and arranging of all my little affairs.

"I rather think you will hear of Madame Lascaris being sent, clear of expense, to Georgia;

but this is between ourselves. I have tried to clear the country of her foul tongue, which may some day or other injure some one extremely ; for she sends others to talk, as she did about Selim. Who trumped up that story about Selim but she ? It came out of her house, and her rascal Fathallah whispered about everywhere these suspicions.¹

“ You know how proud the women of this country are of their eyebrows. I had the eyebrows of three women shaved off last summer for stealing about fifty bread cakes a week out of the dough for the servants’ bread, when it went to the oven. The Shaykh Besheer was delighted with my punishment ; he said he long wanted one for petty faults of women, and should adopt this. He gave me my choice of punishments, and I chose this. For two months these women were the laughing-stock of the mountain, and it did a degree of good

¹ This woman was a native of Georgia ; had been married to Lascaris, Buonaparte’s spy in Syria, but was abandoned by him. Lady Hester got up a subscription for her, and sent her back to her native country ; thereby doing an act of charity, and at the same time getting rid of her slanderous propensity.

you have no idea of. Nothing like decision ; it prevents future harm.

“ Adieu, dear Sir,”

“ Etc. etc. etc.”

Her next letter is dated 21st March :—

“ *Private.*

“ CAIFFA, March 21st, 1815.

“ DEAR SIR,—

“ The arrival of a messenger from Beyrout obliges me to send you an express by a soldier of the Pacha, on whom I can depend ; this being the case, and there being little danger of my letter being lost, I shall begin with the business which occupies so much the public attention here, and then speak of Sir Sidney. I must tell you my story in as few words as possible, and afterwards, at my leisure, enter into details.

“ A man, from interested motives, put into my hand a most curious document, once belonging to the Church of Rome,—an instruction where to find treasure hid in the time of the Crusades. I communicated this to the Porte, saying it was my duty to ‘ give unto Cæsar

the things which were Cæsar's,' etc.; that I was ready to lend them all the assistance in my power, should they decide upon opening the place in question ; but, that I might not hereafter offend, declared my positive determination never to receive the smallest present for this accidental service should the thing turn out to be true. They considered the affair thirty days, and thinking it bore a strong appearance of truth, sent down a confidential person charged with firmans which gave me full power over this country. The Pacha said :—" I must even give her my beard if she asks for it." Orders were given that I was not to be at any expense in anything, and that everything I ordered was to be done, and nothing done without my consent or orders. In short, it is impossible that any person, even a Turk, could have been treated with more unlimited confidence. I have had not one Turkish trick to encounter ; all is open and reasonable, and I think them very agreeable people to deal with. All here seem to think that there is only *one* probability of its failing,—it having formerly been rifled ; but that is only a possibility. The

age of the paper, its style, its exactness,—all leave little doubt of its authenticity.

“Now for Sir Sidney. He has been selected by the Congress as the man the most fit to direct the exertions of the different European Powers respecting the Corsairs of Barbary, *the white slave trade*, etc., etc., and their often not respecting the Ottoman flag. He has therefore wildly taken into his head to employ me as his agent, and wants to send me to Barbary; after that, to repair to Leghorn to meet him. He knows no one else fit to deal with semi-barbarous people but me;—a fine compliment, you will say; but, as I said before, *I will be no man’s agent*. You will say, ‘You are at this moment the Sultan’s agent.’ Yes, but with full *powers*, with *money* if I choose to lower the English name by asking for it, or rather *accepting* it, with no responsibility, as the Porte has already condescended to say that their obligation to me should the thing not succeed is the same as if it did. This feeling has been even carried so far that a threatening sort of manifesto has been prepared by the Pacha (and put into the hands of the confiden-

tial man from the Porte), that should we not find anything, and any person presume either to reproach or jeer me, he is to look to the consequences, etc., etc. But now I must return to Sir Sidney, who has been very imprudent in taking for earnest what the Emeer Besheer only said to that fool Mr. Fiott in compliment : —‘I have fifteen thousand men always ready at a moment’s warning: they are at Sir Sidney’s disposal if he should require them.’

“Upon the strength of this, Sir Sidney has written for these men to hold themselves in readiness, and sent me flags and God knows what, to drill them in the European way. Luckily his letters to the Emeer Besheer are only with a flying seal. I have read them, and *must* keep them back; were I to send them, and he, the Emeer Besheer, to act on them, I should risk his head. I shall settle all this business according to my own judgment; all I have to beg of you is by no means to forward any letters to the Emeer or Shaykh Besheer or any one in the mountain at present, or you will involve yourself and Mr. Liston [the Ambassador] in a pretty business; and

take care how you forward letters, either to Beyrout or Tripoli, which may appear to contain enclosures for them. Keep all this perfectly secret for the present; when I receive my answer from Mr. Liston you shall know his pleasure. Indeed I shall desire him to write his commands to you by the return of the same Tartar which takes my letters, and who sets off to-morrow. I shall dispatch this matter of Sir Sidney's in two days, refusing to have anything to do with this business, and giving him my advice, and pointing out the errors he is likely to fall into from a half-knowledge of this country, and of the character of its Government and inhabitants. I would not for the world be mixed up in a correspondence with all the Ambassadors at Constantinople and Sir Sidney; for he and I are fire and water, and can never agree, though we love each other very much. He has already so entangled the business as to require all my wits to get my neck out of the halter without doing mischief to others. He calls me 'Queen and Comet of the Desert,' and has sent me a comet as large as life, upon a sort of coverlid,

printed at Vienna, surrounded with stars (because they used to say in England when I was surrounded by princes and great men, ‘A star, and another, and another star ; what a constellation, Lady Hester !’), and a magnificent border of flowers to fence in all my honours.

“I fancy he will write to you ere long, but do not answer him, pray, till you have consulted me ; I have not yet told you half the business—only enough for you to see the *danger* that he will place others in if they are not more prudent than he has been upon this occasion.

“When I have time I shall be more explicit. I would serve him with my last shilling, with all the influence I could use, but I would not *serve under him* for an empire. His wife is a devil ; she is old,¹ and artful, very extravagant, and has spent the little which remained

¹ Sir Sidney Smith was a fine and very handsome man. On his return to England after his brilliant defence of Acre, the country rang with his praises, and he might have made the most eligible match in England ; but he chose a wife such as Lady Hester describes. Mr. Barker, however, has told us that she was *very plain*, had only *one eye*, and *six children* ! Marriages are made in heaven !

of her injured fortune. She has contrived to accompany him abroad; which I much regret, as it will keep him from making his way as he would otherwise do. The wives of men of fashion and real rank do not like their daughters to be intimate with such a woman. What do you say to English generosity? I shall send you the copy of a letter I shall write to Ministers about my own affairs, and you will see a dagger in every word; they will be obliged to pay me, and I shall take care to tell them, too, I consider it as no obligation their so doing. This affair of Sir Sidney's is another expense, but that I shall set down also to Government; it is their business, not mine. Have patience with the contempt with which I must treat persons who have little talent, little principle, no justice or generosity; and admire the independent spirit which can treat them to their face as they deserve, and the talent which can force them to act contrary to their inclination. I shall not beg for Sir Sidney, but I shall hint, from myself, to the two great men in the mountain, his situation. I cannot say I have much hope from their grati-

tude, though he saved their lives ; but I hope I shall be disappointed in the opinion I have formed of them.

“The Princess of Wales is now the dear friend of Murat’s wife,—Buonaparte’s sister, you know. I do not like this, nor would I wish the French to know the mischief she might do to England, which she detests. Here, again, are prudent Ministers, to let such a profligate woman go out of the country ! Adieu, dear Sir. I have given you here sufficient proofs of my confidence, and must only add the esteem and sincerity with which I shall ever remain yours,

“H. L. S.”

From Lady Hester to Mr. Barker :—

“*August, 1815.*

“DEAR SIR,—

“I have already told you how much I rejoice at the brilliant victory of the Duke of Wellington, but am too honest to say I approve of a foreign army entering Paris. I think it is against the law of nations to force a king upon any people in the world ; to destroy

our enemies is one thing, to dictate to people not our own, another. . . . I desired Beaudin to go to Saida, and tell my tradesmen that I had nothing to do with any debts she [Mrs. Lascaris] should incur. This he positively refused to do, saying he would not put himself in a situation to have unpleasant things said to him by her and Madame Bertrand. Now if I had £50,000 a year, and could give my doctor, dragomans, etc., etc., £1,000 a year each, I never would hear of one of them presuming to disobey me: if I am a fool, they have no business to eat my bread; if they ought to have confidence in my sense, I ought to be obeyed. You will hear of my having been robbed by two of my servants, and their relations out of the house. The Shaykh Besheer behaved admirably, and left me to decide upon their punishment. One man exiled, the other bastinaded, and the women their eyebrows shaved off. All this is Beaudin's fault. I told him I knew I had a thief in the house. He shrugged his shoulders, and mumbled 'Patience,' etc. But when he was out of the way I went into the village, and looked for a large case

lately come from Beyrouth for a woman who entered my service without a shift, and found it full of stolen goods,—soap, sugar, linen, five antiques belonging to Beaudin (that were to have bought him a watch when Giorgio went to England), all the trinkets he had, a silver watch-chain of mine, and trifles without number. I lost about eighty or a hundred fowls during my journey to Ascalon, turkeys, and several hundred eggs; for I had one hundred and eighty fowls when I left Abra, well secured by a wall, the top of which was covered with thorns and bushes, and the doors, which were not solid wood, neatly covered with mats to prevent anything creeping in or out.

“Aman Bey knows the Duke of York, as he was in England with Elfee Bey. His Royal Highness had the horse I sent him painted at full length by a first-rate artist, as well as the Egyptian who took him to England. This made a fine five hundred guinea picture. The poor horse is dead, and therefore I got another, which I shall send to England in the spring, and also a vast beauty I know of for Lord Wellington, if something does not happen

to oblige me to spend my money some other way. To do a little good, and make plans for doing a little more, is all my ambition ; I do not care if I live on bread and water ; indeed, if I take much else I am ill, so it is very lucky I do not like a good dinner, as well as Mr. North. Providence has pointed out to me a field of action which will astonish you ; you never can guess it, and it depends upon myself alone, and a few trifling circumstances, to make it less or more difficult to me in the course of five years to make the fortunes of a dozen people. Individuals and Government have hankered at this very business for some years : God willing, I shall beat them all in three months from the time I start. Don't get *others* to help you to guess at what this can be. I will explain it all when my mind is at ease, and leave you to judge if I am not lucky sometimes, and how good comes out of evil.

“ Many thanks for the information about Arab horses ; I think it will be well to illustrate by drawings the different forms, particularly the heads of Arab horses, the good and bad marks, the tail in the air, etc., etc., and to

describe the rearing of the colts, etc. Let me see the rough copy, and after that have it written out fair, and pretty drawings made; and I will send it to the Duke, and he will have it published perhaps. Till I can send the things to Mr. Maseyk to translate (which I will do by the first safe convenience), he may collect little Arab stories such as are told (Maalem Moossa is a famous story-teller), and make a volume of them. These sort of stories, such as the three men near Bengal who were going to have their heads cut off, and who asked leave to say their prayers, and who disappeared in the water they washed in,—one came out in Egypt, one I forget where, and one at Aleppo—he was the bad one, and his history is curious; he had a skinful of magical water, with which he transported himself about, and did all his mischief. All this appears nonsense to you, but histories of this kind, with a few peeps into a harem when a husband is out, with a fine description of coffee cups, of precious stones, and gold and silver stuff furniture, fountains, pavements, slaves and perfumes, will enchant all the *bon ton*, and no fine lady or fop will

be without ‘Abdallah,’ or ‘The Damascus’ or ‘Syrian Story Teller.’ French perhaps answers better for these sort of things than English; but this as Mr. Maseyk pleases. Egerton, the Duke of York’s bookseller, is my brother’s particular friend; and though he is a great man, and sells chiefly military and choice books, will do anything to oblige me, and the little book will fly about like wildfire. A few Arabic verses also here and there will be charming, as that would please the learned with the Arabic on one side and the translation on the other; they must buy the book for the stories. Don’t laugh at all this, for I know London and its follies better than anybody. I know how anything Arabic goes down, and how the delightful translation of Arabic poetry was admired, even by Mr. Pitt. Carlisle’s ode of adversity is beautiful; he died, poor man, very young. So set Mr. M. to work.

“Yours sincerely,

“HESTER L. STANHOPE.”

Sir Sidney Smith had written to Mr. Barker to obtain for him reliable information respecting

the massacre by Napoleon Buonaparte of the 400 prisoners at Jaffa (some persons say there were 1,000, some 2,000, but 400 seems to have been the more probable number), in imitation of Alexander the Great, who committed the same act of atrocity at Tyre. Mr. *Barker procured the required attestations of two old persons at Jaffa who were present on the spot.

"Private.

" His Excellency Sir SIDNEY SMITH,

" Vienna.

" ALEPO, 1st Feb., 1815.

" In obedience to your Excellency's command, of which I had the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of the 14th August and 31st October last, I applied to all my native correspondents on this coast for information of the Jaffa massacre in 1799. I have now the honour to transmit you herewith two Arabic letters, which give a satisfactory and, I am persuaded, faithful detail of the principal circumstances attending that horrible act of barbarity.

" All the other answers to my enquiries were in substance the same; but being less circum-

stantial, I do not think fit to trouble you with their perusal.

“I shall be extremely glad to hear that these documents have answered your purpose, and should be most happy to execute any other of your Excellency’s wishes.

“Your noble relative at Saida was well ten days ago.

“The Emeer Besheer was also in good health and prosperous when I last heard from him.

“I have the honour to be, with truth and great respect,

“Your obedient and faithful Servant,

“JOHN BARKER.”

The gentlemen travellers who came to Mr. Barker’s house from Constantinople, on a tour in Syria, used to relate to him all the gossip of the capital. To him, who knew the parties, the stories were interesting ; as, for instance, the French spoken by the Lady Ambassadress, which was incomprehensible to any but English people, for it was a translation of English idioms into French. Speaking of a person her husband disliked, she said, “C’est un des peu personnes,

sonnes que mon mari est horriblement préjugé contre."

At another time, when riding out on a mare with some gentlemen, she said, " Si votre cheval est cheval male, approchez-vous loin de moi, parceque mon cheval est cheval femelle."

In those days a thorough knowledge of the French language was acquired by very few, except those who resided some time on the Continent.

CHAPTER XIII.

Lady Hester hears of Waterloo.—Lord Fitzroy Somerset Wounded.—Lord Uxbridge also.—Her Love for the Army.—Her Early Obligations to Sir William Drummond.—Disapproves of the Policy of the Allies, and of the French.—Lord Liverpool.—A Lampoon on him.—Letter from Her Ladyship to Earl Bathurst.—Fails to find the Treasure.—Her intention to revenge Monsieur Boutin's Death on his Assassins.—Her Letter to General Maitland.

SHORTLY after Lady Hester's last letter, the details of the battle of Waterloo arrived, and her ladyship writes to Mr. Barker as follows :—

"August 15th, 1815.

" DEAR SIR,—

" I very much feel *all* that you are so kind as to say in your letter about my dearest brother [James]. I opened it with great emotion, for I had already heard of the battle from Cyprus, and supposed by that statement poor Lord Fitzroy Somerset [afterwards Lord Raglan] killed, whom I see by the account you send me is mentioned only as wounded. He is my

brother's dearest friend, and under all circumstances this misfortune will cause great affliction to the Duke of Beaufort [his brother], and to a numerous host of relations. Colonel Delaney must be the nephew of my dear and old friend Sir D. Dundas, who, the instant he was appointed Commander-in-Chief, sent to my brother to be his *aide-de-camp*, if upon consulting me he saw no objection to it. One must feel for such sincere friends, but what most presses upon my mind is the agony poor Lady Charlotte will feel at Lord Uxbridge's wound, whose very vices are better than most people's virtues. There is something so high-minded, so gallant in all he does, both in public and private life, that, though blamed and envied by some people, I fancy few officers are more generally looked up to than he is. His person was magnificent, and he was perhaps the best rider in the world; but alas! can never ride again.

“Buonaparte confessed, at the beginning of the Spanish war, that four of our Light Dragoon, or rather Hussar, regiments, which Lord Uxbridge then commanded, were by far the most perfect in every respect that he had ever seen

in any country. But this reflects chiefly on the Duke of York, though Lord Uxbridge commanded them to perfection. All these reflections, added to the great anxiety I feel about James, whose last letter was written in March (and I know not what may have become of him since), agitate my mind extremely."

"August 24th, 1815.

"I send a horseman to overtake your messenger, having just received the *Gazette* by way of Acre. Thank God, I do not see my brother's name; but cruel have been our losses. I, who know the Duke of Wellington, know by his dispatch that he is not in good spirits; not that he ever writes like Sir Sidney Smith, but I know his noble heart is full, and he does not pretend to disguise that our loss is excessive. Every soldier in the British army is dear to me, because I consider, first, that a nation owes everything to them, and because I am attached to them from private feeling which springs from my attachment to their Commander-in-Chief and those friends who serve under him. Giorgio would have seen much more of London had my

recommendation of him been a stronger one. But it is a point of honour with me never to strongly recommend what I cannot from my conscience approve; therefore my word is always taken, both about men and horses.

“Yours very sincerely,

“H. L. STANHOPE.”

“MOUNT LEBANON, 2nd Sept., 1815.

“. . . The Emeer Besheer is perfectly indifferent to all your news, as he was to Sir Sidney’s *private situation*,¹ which I touched upon in a very delicate way. How disgusting is this sort of apathy, both in the great and little! I have no mercy upon either. It may be a fault, but I confess it honestly. A person who can shed a tear at my misfortunes, who would exert himself when wanted most, might send thousands (if I had them) to the bottom of the sea the next day without a reproach; but to stare like a stuck pig, and neither to feel for me nor for anything else, makes me outrageous, and I must reason with myself, not to commit some act of

¹ Sir Sidney’s generosity had involved him in debts, and Lady Hester expected the Emeer Besheer would pay them out of gratitude!

retaliation which my conscience might hereafter smite me for.

“To Sir William Drummond, the translator of Perseus, the most disagreeable of men, a free-thinker, and a profligate in every way, I owe a great deal. He is a perfect man of the world, and can talk as much good sense as any moral philosopher. My excessive wildness when very young alarmed him, and he was always lecturing me; but how? In the harshest and most cutting way possible. But the manner or language I did not consider,—only the substance of what he said; and I feel and shall ever acknowledge my obligation to him; and what he said to me I have carefully stored up for the advantage of others.

“You must not think of giving a *fête*¹ yet; there is much to settle in France—the state of parties and of the country is shocking. I confess I have great fears as to the result of marching into Paris, and wish to God it was all over. It is clear the French *were* charming, but their late perfidy to the Emperor, to the King, and their seeming want of all feeling and principle, makes

¹ This refers to Mr. Barker’s intention of giving a great public *fête* in honour of the victory at Waterloo.

one hardly know what to think of them ; but that is no reason we should interfere too much. What shall we gain by it ? and who in the end will thank us for it ? France, I fear, will follow the example of Spain, who considers us more like enemies than friends ; and our partizans may hereafter be proscribed, like those in Spain ; for every respectable member of the Cortes, every officer who proved most his attachment to us and to his country, is *now* in the Inquisition. Fact, certain fact,—too horrible to think of, but which should serve as a lesson to us not to go beyond the mark. It is not delicate, either, to march in and out of a capital as if it were a ball-room, and do nothing at last but offend and wound the inhabitants. Dance upon the tight-rope, if you like it, when *all* this is quite settled ; but have patience, lest anything unexpectedly bad should happen. Think me a croaker, but I have not been altogether a false prophet ; and when you talk of victories, you little know what they cost us, and what a continuance of the war may bring upon us, and when a spirit of discontent which triumph for the moment keeps under, may

break out. The difference is this: other nations when they fight gain something like territory, but we, nothing but honour and hard blows,—which will not feed up John Bull for long, you will see.

“Here is a volume, without having touched upon the quarter of what I have to say. I hope you will soon send me more news. I suppose Mr. Liston cannot go home just yet? Have you heard more about his departure? I hear few persons are going to Mecca; they fear what may happen on the road. I told the doctor to persuade Shaykh Ibraheem¹ [Burckhardt] to come here, if he met with him. Your best friend will be a great man some day, I hope. I think he deserves it in every way. I hope all your family are well. Do not neglect your own health, for the autumn is not a favourable season in this country.

“Yours, dear Sir,

“Very sincerely,

“H. L. STANHOPE.”

¹ This is said ironically. She disliked Burckhardt, and frequently in her letters told Mr. Barker so, though she could not substantiate anything against him, unless it be that she had been told he had spoken against her family.

Lady Hester writes to Mr. Barker very shortly afterwards on the same subject :—

“ MOUNT LEBANON, Sept. 4th, 1815.

“ How can you be in such great spirits, my dear Sir? Everything you have communicated to me has, I think, a tendency to make one low-spirited or furious. Those who have recommended Buonaparte’s being taken to England deserve to be hanged. You talk of the war being at an end: we shall see. You do not appear to be aware of what may arise from conduct marked by imbecility and cowardice. Why did we not at once put an end to a man who has cost us the lives of thousands and tens of thousands, and who has brought our resources to the lowest ebb? But this fools call magnanimity! As for what is doing in France, it is horrible—without principle, sense, or humanity. Louis XVIII. must certainly have so stuffed himself in England as to have given not only his stomach but his brain an indigestion, to act as he does. I am not in good humour with the French, because they have manifested a degree of unparalleled perfidy not only to him but also to their Em-

peror (all the rest I could forgive and account for but this); yet the measures the King is taking will never set things to rights. What is the meaning of treating with individuals and sending armies to attack the French as a body? Is this fair and manly? Why alter the Charte Constitutionelle? It is very cowardly. He made a ridiculous one, it is certain,—too like the English (which would suit no other nation in the world but ours); but when made, he had better have kept to it. *Hélas la Belle France!* It is lost, and will never recover itself for centuries,—a melancholy consideration to the philosophic mind. In one month I would have arranged everything with the French army. If an hundred men had deserted *my cause*, they might have shot me. I should have suited these people, for they would have found me a greater devil than their Emperor. You cannot suppose that the Duke de Berry (for he is such a monkey) with a little mock magnanimity could keep such a desperate set of fellows in order. The honour of all who shed their blood for their country is dear to me, and I could not hurt the feelings of the French soldier more cheerfully

than I could those of an English one. I am quite sure that these men, who had lived upon hard blows and glory for years, without either profit or comfort of any kind, might have been managed if proper means had been taken ; but they were allowed to be worked upon by designing people, their honour is tarnished, and France is the victim. Had the English and the great Alexander blown up Paris with all the *petites maîtresses*, hair - dressers, band - boxes, rouge, statues, and pictures, I should have better understood this feeling of revenge for past injuries, than conduct which is without plan and without principle.

‘ When blushes crept o’er Jenky’s¹ brow,
No Consul’s eye his shame espied,
For Wellington had pluck’d a bough
Of laurels his defects to hide.’

“ Without these laurels we should be bowed down with shame and confusion, for there is no one act which will bear being investigated either by sound policy, justice, or humanity ; so do not

¹ Note by Lady Hester :—“ Lord Liverpool’s nickname, from his father, old Jenkinson. When people blush a little, they blush in the cheeks ; a second degree, up to the eyes ; but I suppose Jenky to blush above the eyes,—an excess of blushing.”

talk to me of pride and glory without end, but open your eyes, Monsieur le Consul, and get me hanged for treason. Tell Mr. Liston that you are the most perfect of John Bulls, not to be contaminated by my principles and letters. As an Ambassador, he must look prim at one like this; but he could not answer it, or any one else. Take a camel driver, and ask his opinion of our conduct ; and, unprejudiced as he must be, he would give judgment against us and the Allied Powers. You may send Mr. Liston a copy of this letter, if you like, to prove to him the ordeal you have to go through every time you send me news.

“ Very sincerely yours,
“ H. L. STANHOPE.”

Here follows copy of a letter from Lady Hester to Earl Bathurst, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs :—

“ MY LORD,—

“ I beg leave to enclose to your lordship a copy of a paper once in the possession of a Spanish priest, after whose death it fell into my hands. The man who gave it me

asked for no reward unless the treasure was found ; this being the case, I requested Mr. Liston to communicate it to the Porte, who after considering the matter, and taking the Sultan's pleasure upon it, sent a confidential person, Dervish Mustapha Effendee, to consult with me upon this business, and the best mode of proceeding. He was the bearer of firmans which put everything at my disposal, and gave me full liberty to avoid all expense. It was my first intention to have sent him to Ascalon alone ; but the Pacha of Acre and the Effendee, upon examining the firmans, discovered that the treasure, if found, could not be removed from the spot without my orders. This being the case, I was obliged to yield to their wishes, and to proceed to Ascalon.

“ Had I made use of the power in my hands, and pressed mules, and left services unpaid, I should have undone all the reputation I wish to give the English name,—that of strict integrity and disinterestedness. You know my circumstances : I was unable to stand the expense, therefore I borrowed the money necessary for the journey from Mr. John Barker, our Consul

at Aleppo, stating to him that it was upon the public account, and that if Government did not think proper to pay it, he should never lose the money. He sent it to me in the handsome manner in which he does everything.

“The paper annexed will give your lordship a full account of what passed at Ascalon. If the place was rifled, it was no fault of mine.¹ Had it not been, three millions having fallen thus into the Turkish treasury would have been worth a subsidy. As I am writing to a man of honour, who, I know, will not commit me, I need not have any scruple in telling your lordship that Dervish Mustapha Effendee told me very distinctly that, if this business should succeed, the Porte would owe me so many obligations that nothing I asked would be refused. He did not mean in point of presents, for I set out by saying that, let the thing turn out as it would, I would not receive any. Determined, however, to try if I were in earnest, he brought me some, as if from himself, which I refused; and have

¹ No treasure was found; only a marble statue, or part of a statue, which Lady Hester caused to be broken, to exonerate herself from interested motives.

refused, against all precedent, accepting anything from either Pacha or Governor upon my road, except food and corn, which they were ordered to supply me with. The money I have spent is for other expenses, not to be avoided in the singular situation in which chance placed me. At Acre, where the Divan assembled, I was placed at the Pacha's elbow, and in every way treated as his son. I certainly have acted without orders from Government, and therefore have no claims upon them. Should they grant me my expenses only in consideration of my circumstances, I will not accept them; but should my conduct be approved, and viewed in the same light of approbation by my countrymen as by the Turks, it is another matter. I have not mentioned the subject to Mr. Liston, lest he should claim my expenses of the Porte, which I would never under any circumstances hear of. Besides, *he* was not, any more than myself, aware that I should be obliged to take this long and dangerous journey, or of the manner in which I was ordered to be treated; for the firman, a secret one, was addressed to the Pacha of Acre.

“I believe I have nothing more to add, but to request your lordship not to allow the bearer of this (Giorgio, a Greek, who has been some years in my service) to return without an answer ; for upon it will depend my future plans.

“I have the honour to be, my Lord,

“Your obedient humble servant,

“HESTER L. STANHOPE.”

Lady Hester continued to write her views of politics to Mr. Barker, at the same time that she declares she will do so no longer :—

“CONVENT OF MAR ELIAS,

“December 5th, 1815.

“... To be a politician, as I am, from system, and to judge and argue upon facts, which an experience of many years has enabled me to calculate upon the expediency of, and a natural love of independence taught me to consider as *infamous* in principle (as my creed is, ‘Do as you would be done by’), is quite another thing from thus committing oneself—for what? A love of argument, of being singular, and from a foolish vanity. I bore you

with politics for this reason; I wish you to see if what I say will turn out true—that this *general peace* cannot *last*. I told you from the beginning what would happen: that things were easily put into confusion, but not so easily arranged as persons suppose. I could reason on for an hour, and I could thunder about France as my grandfather did about America; but I have said enough for you to be completely aware of my opinions, which are founded upon my ardent love of high principles of action, and delicacy about the national honour of *every country*, friend or enemy, and a fervent wish that *that* of England should have remained as unstained as it was sixty years ago. I will fill no more letters with politics: you are a John Bull, I am a citizen of the world; therefore we can never agree.

“I am glad to find that you and your Pacha are such good friends. I am nearly as fond of cutting off heads as he is, and I hope you will be aware of this resemblance when the caravan returns from Mecca, and the rains are over. I hope then there will be an example of it in the Ansairee mountains. Why will you Con-

suls restrain me from a natural impulse of revenge?¹ I could not see any one die *thus*, at a distance from their native home, without a pang, unless it was a Levantine,—and dogs may die the death of dogs.

“ You must write a sort of pamphlet about Arab horses, and dedicate it to the Duke of York ; I must have this done, so prepare it for Antioch. I have some idea of bringing my beautiful horse with me, and embarking him from Alexandretta. Will that do, do you think ? You will hear a great deal from Mr. Volpi. Whenever a messenger comes this way, let him know, if you please ; he may have something to send me, for I have set him to pick up facts about the plague. He is *industrious*, and no fool. But I think you will find him detestable, for he is a rank atheist ; but keep that to ourselves. I always was a Wahabee myself, but an atheist strikes me with horror.

¹ This refers to her intention of insisting that the Emeer Besheer shall punish by decapitation the Ansairee murderers of a Frenchman, Monsieur Boutin. He had been personally known to her ladyship, and she felt his death, and the circumstances attending it, “ in a foreign land,” very keenly.

“ Many happy new years to you and your family. I beg you to make the compliments of the season acceptable to the ladies of your house, and believe me, dear Sir,

“ Yours very sincerely,

“ H. L. STANHOPE.”

Copy of a letter from Lady Hester to General Sir Thomas Maitland, Governor of Malta, etc.:—

“ CONVENT OF MAR ELIAS,

March 30th, 1816.

“ SIR,—

“ I cannot put up a packet of letters for England without expressing to your Excellency how excessively I feel obliged to you for having kindly received Mr. Edward Barker, and having interested yourself in him. I am sure that your Excellency would feel more inclined to serve him if you were fully aware of the zealous manner in which Mr. Barker of Aleppo performs his public duty as British Consul, and how sedulously and successfully he keeps up the character of the English nation. My giving him credit upon that subject is no small proof of his merit, as it is a point I am seldom satisfied upon, having

every possible fault to find with the other Consuls, as well as with most English travellers that come into this part of the world, whose conduct for the most part is very ridiculous, and serves rather to inspire contempt than impress the Turks with a high opinion either of the talents or character of the nation they belong to. Notwithstanding what I have been saying about the English, I am so excessively cross with all the empty bigwigs who have arranged things so ill upon the Continent, that I am sure that if I came to Malta I should make your Excellency so extremely angry by my abuse of them, that you would shut me up in the Boschetto. My grandfather was the man for these awful times; he would have humbled France in the way she deserved, without having violated the sacred name of Peace; which, as things now stand, appears to me a much worse situation than that of open war.

“I remain,

“Yours most sincerely,

“HESTER L. STANHOPE.”

CHAPTER XIV.

Imprisonment of Mr. Bruce at Paris.—State of France and England after the Peace.—Mr. Bankes.—Anecdote of Lady Hester's Early Life.—Amusing Surmises as to what she would do if she were a Moorish Queen.—Accepts to be Godmother to Mr. Barker's Daughter.—Speaks of Gunter the Confectioner in 1817.—Isabel Countess of Sefton.—Lady Hester's Politics admired by Pitt, Lansdowne, Bute, Minto, Windham, etc.—Anecdote of Lord Chatham and the King.—Distress in England.—Mr. Bruce's Proposal.—Her Father's Death.—Mr. Barker's intention of going to England, and of purchasing Horses.—Amusing Parallel.—Lascaris, Buonaparte's Spy.—Interview with Lady Hester at Antioch.—Beauties of Antioch.—Letter from the Prince Royal of Persia to Mr. Barker.—Death of Seitzen, the African Traveller.—Anecdote of Queen Charlotte.—Lady Hester prepares Letters of Introduction for Mr. Barker.

M R. BRUCE, with some other gentlemen, had been arrested in Paris and condemned to three months' imprisonment for having assisted a friend, confined for political reasons, to escape, and Lady Hester thought of writing in his favour to the King. She afterwards changed her mind, and writes to Mr. Barker in reply to one of his letters dated 28th April, 1816 :—

"*May 11th, 1816.*

"DEAR SIR,—

"I should never have thought of writing to the King had things been as you suppose, and had I known that B. had true friends who could serve him. The Duke of Wellington dislikes him,—and it is natural, as Bruce forced him to call upon him ; Lord Castlereagh detests him, as he has ever refused to enter his lordship's house ; but Sir S. Stuart is an honourable, delightful man, and all my hopes rest in him : the others will do Bruce all the harm they can, I am pretty certain. Letters which I have received from Paris, from my brother, who has seen Bruce, have set my mind at ease,—at least, comparatively so ; and I had quite given up the thought of sending my letter to the King long ere I had received your kind advice upon the subject. It is always, however, better to do much than to do little for one's friends when under a cloud, and I could say to the King what few others could say.

"Everything in England and France goes on as ill as possible ; and I heard (not from my brother) that our soldiers, sick of all they see,

now wear Napoleon's picture, and the French Government have been obliged to make a complaint about it. What have I told you? I know English soldiers and an English mob better than anybody. Shocking proceedings in England, and serious riots are expected. The state of France is so bad that even my brother and B. think it dangerous. I should not fix there, as the English are so detested, and a revolution so likely. *This!* after having tormented me to death to come, and write in a way to break one's heart, with a sort of half-reproach, besides having employed others to write to the same effect. A pretty business altogether; and I am so low, so unwell, that I know not what to do. The idea of what may shortly happen preys upon my mind in a way not to be expressed. Dear John Bull, you would not do to carry on a treasonable correspondence if you could not understand 'kept by him.' The King, of course, I meant.

"Sir W. Chatterton and Mr. Leslie, two Irish gentlemen, are now here; they are friends of Lord Sligo, and therefore I have been civil to them; they are liberal sort of men, and are

going to Aleppo and Antioch, on their way to Constantinople.

“ Pearce is returned, and I find Mr. Banks could not get to Palmyra. P. tells me that it is *I* who have spoilt the Arabs; but it is his obstinacy which has caused the business to fail. He has done exactly what I forbid him to do, and never did what I strictly charged him to do. Besides having made himself out a prince, and everything else that is great. Mr. Buckingham, I am told, has been to Homs, and tampered there with the Arabs; so his journey also is spoilt. What troublesome people!—never will I try to serve Englishmen again. They are all so wrong-headed, so obstinate and self-sufficient. I shall have done with them for the future, for the trouble and expense of all these letters and messengers is by no means agreeable to me. The highest as well as the lowest envy me, and fancy that I have paved my way with gold in this country, and not by my wits; I am not so stupid as not to see that disposition in every one I have yet seen,—Mr. Brooke Taylor excepted, the dear, the delightful General’s brother, who minded all I said in the smallest trifles, and

was so kind, so gentlemanlike, and so delighted if he heard me praised. But all those I have since seen have appeared to me as if they only asked my opinion to laugh at me; but it does not signify; they, not I, will be the losers.

“Yours sincerely,

“H. L. STANHOPE.”

“MOUNT LEBANON, July 6th, 1816.

“. . . I never was a prudent person, and it will not answer for me to turn prudent in my old age. When *dans mes beaux jours*, I went into Newgate into the King’s Bench, and visited those confined for high treason, and never either cared what people thought or said, and made the very judge stare at the effrontery with which I took the part of the guilty. You see, I am obstinate; that is my character, and no person is so blind as those who will not see, let the reason be what it may. But I do not say I am right, for I would at all times rather be wrong than waver, because, for my own part, I would rather anybody would become my determined enemy than a wavering friend.

“ The English corvette upon the coast will most likely drive the privateer away, but should I be taken you may depend upon it it is all for my glory, and I shall become a Moorish Queen. I desire you will console Williams,¹ and sell ‘ Hannefee’² to a good master, and by no means allow Sir S. Smith to have any opportunity of displaying vanity in rescuing me from the decrees of fate; and not a slave shall they give up when I am in that part of the world, to a moral certainty, but make a great many more. If one of my privateers take fat Lord Camden I shall set him to hatch goose’s eggs, which is the use they turned the fat Sicilian Admiral to; I shall stick up Lord Liverpool to scare the crows, and cold-hearted Castlereagh to freeze sherbet, and J. W. Bankes to count paras,³ and my Hakeem Bashee⁴ will find *appropriate service* for Viscount Sidmouth; and if I get hold of Mr. C. Yorke he will be in some

¹ Her lady companion.

² One of her mares.

³ Small copper coin.

⁴ “ Hakeem Bashee ” means “ head-physician.”

danger of being suffocated with perfumes and dying under the honours I shall bestow upon him as the most honest and truly loyal member of the House of Commons. If Captain Gambier should happen to be with you, you may read this to him, and tell him, for his uncle's sake, if he falls into my clutches I shall put him into an ivory box, and send him back to his wife with a little cub lion, fifty strings of pearls, and a Turkish dress; for I find she 'wanted' one when she was at Saida.

"Yours most sincerely,

"HESTER L. STANHOPE."

"January 30th, 1817.

"DEAR SIR,—

"Only imagine! your letter about my being godmother to your child only reached me yesterday. . . . Lucy and Isabella, for names of women, are the names in our family. I should prefer Isabella, if I might choose; for I always think of my poor sister when I hear the name of Lucy mentioned. If I had known of this I should have

ordered a cake of my old friend Mr. Gunter of Berkeley Square, as big round as a *saineeh*,¹ with all sorts of John Bulls and their wives upon it. These cakes will keep for six months, and are excellent, but only made for English stomachs. Adieu, my dear Sir,

“Yours most sincerely,

“H. L. STANHOPE.

“P.S.—I send two more pieces of music for your eldest daughter.”

“Feb. 11th, 1817.

“I hope, my dear friend, that Selim will have forwarded my letter in time to clear up this jumble, and for your little girl to be called Hester Isabella; I hope, however, she will not turn out so great a coquette as my cousin of that name, who, when she lost her husband, should have put upon her card the ‘Dowager Countess of Sefton,’ but chose to put, ‘Isabel, Countess of Sefton;’ and a John Bull, not very polite, wrote, ‘Was a Belle Countess,’ etc.

“. . . When ill in bed, in that state of mind, which I always am in, about the time I

¹ A large round tray, on which dinner in Turkey is served.

lost Mr. Pitt and my brother, during which period every one about me is afraid of letting me know the day of the week or the day of the month, as it has sometimes thrown me into fits, I am not equal to anything like business, or able to write.

“ . . . Do not scold me, for I will never be reckoned *mean*; necessity alone will have induced me to act as I must do; and even if I drove an ass to market with garden stuff, I would rather do that, and not be a *mean* market-woman. I would say by that, ‘Have bread to give to the famished, and owe no one any obligation, rather than be shut up in miserable starving dignity, and be obliged to shut my ears to the cries of misery, or to accept services from others I never could hope to recompense in any way.’”

“ You will not talk politics with me, nor shall I ask you any questions; but though I have not received letters from England since October, I have received indirect information of what is going on there. Shocking!—you will perhaps *begin* to believe that I am not *prejudiced* in my political opinions. Not only

Mr. Pitt, but the late Lord Lansdowne, Lord Bute, Lord Minto, Windham, etc., etc., considered me as one of the best of politicians, though they all differed amongst themselves. I am born one, I know; and for some wise political purpose, most probably, has God decreed my sufferings.

“I have so humbled that fellow B.,¹ but he shall kiss the earth before I have done with him yet. I think well of people in general, until I discover positive *ill*; then neither words nor actions can have any effect upon me, and his flattery I despise as I do his vices; for a liar is the most odious of beings.”

“Respect, attention, and politeness, is what is absolutely necessary for a man to be well looked up and treated in an easy way by a superior. He raises himself by this,—as my grandfather did when he would never *sit* in the King’s presence, but kneel when the gout prevented his standing; he kept *his place*, and made the King know his own.

“A fate watches over me; and you may believe me when I tell you most sincerely

¹ Bankes, whom she disliked very much.

that I would not change my destiny, however unhappy it may appear, for that of thousands of others; because, although I have been miserable at times, I have always had not a little to command, if not of money, of a *something* which others seek for their whole life with their pockets full, and never get it. It is not my *rank* which has procured me this, for higher rank than mine is totally devoid of it. What it is I cannot explain; but finding friends here and there in the world, and having the power to knock down single-handed my enemies, and never to feel a dread of failing anywhere. God fits the back to the burden; therefore, after all, it does not much signify what weight of sorrow one carries. Too philosophical, you will say; but at least it is a happy thing for the unhappy to reason thus. Adieu, dear Sir,

“Yours most sincerely,

“HESTER L. STANHOPE.”

“April 20th, 1817.

“News brought a week ago by an English captain is shocking to a degree. I have had

a letter from a very great man (no relation); he tells me servants are put upon oaten bread; his grooms formerly lived much better than the first merchants at Constantinople.

“Now, at his own table, pastry is forbid, and all luxuries; all wine but port and sherry. I am not sure that, fifteen years ago, a valet in that family could have dined without claret.¹

“Don’t send me any papers, because they are all full of *horrors*. I have always told you the truth about the state of England, and temper and mind of its people, with which I am better acquainted than perhaps any other individual existing,—all classes, from the prince to the ploughboy. I feel very ill to-day, and I write with difficulty. I see many things which affect and agitate my mind greatly. How I wish I was a man! Adieu: write me volumes by Beaudin.

“Yours most sincerely,

“H. L. S.

“P.S.—Williams will write in further ex-

¹ This refers to the state of England after the peace, when discontent (which Lady Hester in her previous letters foresaw) really broke out on account of the financial crisis.

planation. I think it appears that B.'s father [Mr. Bruce, sen.] will have a clear £10,000 a year left of private property. He has made some proposals to me, but if they had £100,000 per annum I have done with them both for ever."

Here is a climax of misfortunes! She rejects the "proposals," though in all her letters we see how "interested" she was in "B." Her father dies, and makes no provision for her; her debts, both in England and Syria, are great; but she will not give up her independence, and prefers leading the harrowing life she describes, and which has been so graphically depicted by her physician, Doctor Meryon, in his "*Memoirs of Lady Hester Stanhope*" (1845), and also in his "*Travels of Lady Hester Stanhope*," —to accepting "proposals," made, no doubt, from the most disinterested motives.

Her father, however, had made ample provision for certain dependents and pensioners; and she speaks of them in a way which does credit to her heart:—

"I long to hear all about the poor old people who have carried me in their arms. I wish I

could be with them for a month, to console them a little ; for they are so attached, and little interested, that they will derive little comfort at first from knowing they are well provided for. I am happy to find, by extracts from newspapers which were sent me before Beaudin arrived, that the public do justice to the great integrity which ever distinguished my father, with all his strange conduct. But some of the news is shocking to a degree ; I cannot tell you the agitation I feel, though it is useless for me, or any other person like myself, to torment themselves about public events ; yet, being out of these scenes of horror and distress is but little consolation to one who feels in every nerve for their friends and for a bleeding country. Oh ! were I but a man I would call up the very stones to mutiny against those who have disgraced the name of Englishmen, and brought ruin upon a once flourishing and happy land."

Mr. Barker had written to her ladyship his intention of purchasing horses, and taking them to England through France. Lady Hester writes to him :—

“THE CASTLE OF JESBA,

“*July, 1817.*

“DEAR SIR,—

“I am delighted with your plan and the success you have had about procuring horses, and am much obliged to you for having given me early notice of your intentions. I should like to have visited Europe *before* you, that I might have talked of you to my friends,—which now I must do by letters of introduction, which I shall send you when at Antioch. . . . How different will be my feelings and appearance in France whenever I go there, to yours and Mrs. Barker’s! I, in such good humour with every Frenchman except a *traitor* and an *immigrant*, admiring everything around me; you, bored to death with French spooneys, and despising all you see. I, in an ‘abah’ [eastern cloak], upon my mare, admiring but not enjoying what I *cannot* have. Your horses, all fat and flourishing; mine, thin, and looking like those of some old Bedouin. Your cook bringing you a long bill of fare for a great dinner; mine, with a handful of fresh frogs of the best kind, proposing with *much energy* to dress them as

l'Empereur used to eat them. The vulgar English, talking such stuff which they call loyalty and politics, and all looking at me as if I were a monster (except a few officers in the army and navy; those I love, and they do not hate me), and exclaiming, when they see me, ‘Poor creature! surely she is mad to go about such a figure.’ I believe, in my conscience, that I should be in a fright to meet such an outlandish figure, myself. I hope you have shaved your head as I desired you, or you will lose half your hair in England. I have seen that happen very often: the new hair will be strong and thick, and able to withstand the horrid climate. You will never return in a year and a half: one winter you must spend in London; the other in the country, hunting and shooting. . . . Mark my words, you will find England very dull, not the hospitality you expect; for the English spirit which once existed is now nearly extinct. But new objects have their charms, and will probably delight Mrs. Barker at first.

“Yours most sincerely,
“H. L. STANHOPE.”

We must not transcribe any more of her ladyship's letters, which are too voluminous, but merely say that Mr. Barker did not carry out his intention of going to England to place his children there for their education till 1819, two years afterwards.

Lady Hester frequently in her letters had occasion to speak of Lascaris. This man was a spy of Buonaparte; he travelled about sometimes as a pedlar, and more than once feigned to be insane, the better to deceive. He had generally with him, as a kind of servant or companion, one Fathallah Sahyer, mentioned by Lamartine in his "Travels in Syria;" but neither Fathallah nor he had the least suspicion that Lascaris was a spy. He declared himself to be a descendant of the Greek Emperors of Constantinople, and styled himself "Chevalier." "He ingratiated himself into Lady Hester's good graces, and accompanied her ladyship to Palmyra; but instead of being useful to her, he was most disagreeable. Having, one day, mildly reproved him about some irregularity in the arrangements committed to his care, he as-

sumed a fierce look, and stepping close up to her ladyship, said, ‘Don’t you know, Madam, that you are here in my power?’ Lady Hester, with admirable presence of mind, dissimulated her indignation till she returned to Hamah.”

Lascaris abandoned his wife, and then sent her one hundred dollars, on condition that she would go to Constantinople, and then to Georgia, her native country. He died at Cairo in Egypt, in 1817; and Mr. Salt, British Consul-General, defrayed his burial expenses.

On the 1st August, 1816, Mr. Barker went to Antioch to meet Lady Hester, but he returned to Aleppo on the 9th. In a letter to Mr. Bankes he speaks of the “audiences” her ladyship gave him; for he could not call them conversations, because she conducted all that herself, very rarely allowing him to put in a word. In one of these interviews, speaking of the ladies of the Court at the time she lived with her uncle, Mr. Pitt, she was describing a lady who, she said, had attracted all the attention of the company for her wit,

sprightliness, and beauty, and asked him suddenly, “Who do you think she was?”

Mr. Barker, who had been listening *two* hours to her voice, half asleep, for it was two o’clock in the morning (when her ladyship generally gave audiences), taken off his guard, said, “I suppose it must have been the Duchess of Devonshire,”—a noted belle of the time, in London. “No,” said she, “it was me, it was me.”

He never forgave himself this want of gallantry and presence of mind.

His descriptions of the lovely environs of Antioch,—the groves of Daphne, at a place two hours off, now called Dwaire, near Bait-il-Mah (the House of Water), and the delicious sweet water of the spring Sghaibo,—are not exaggerated. The vegetation is marvellous, and the climate all that can be desired; but nothing whatever remains of the Temple of Apollo at Daphne, nor indeed are there any ruins near of what was once The Groves, from which the Emperor Julian’s army of soldiers could with difficulty be torn away.

On the 12th August, 1817, he received a

letter from the Prince Royal of Persia, Abbass Mirza, to the following effect :—

Translation of a letter from the Prince Royal of Persia,
Abbass Mirza, to Mr. Barker, Her Majesty's Consul-
General at Aleppo, after the compliments :—

“The Persian pilgrims who returned some time since from Mecca have informed me of the friendly aid and support which you so benevolently afforded in their favour. I now return you my sincere thanks for your most acceptable exertions and good offices; and I assure you the impression which your kindness has made in my breast is both strong and lasting. I take the opportunity of the departure of a large party of pilgrims to write this letter, and to request your acceptance of a cashmere shawl, which the high in dignity, Aga Ali Ascar, will deliver to you. I shall be always happy to hear of your welfare, and offer the assurance of my high consideration.

(Sealed) SS.

“ABBASS MIRZA.

“A true translation.

“Henry Willcock.

“Written in the month of Rejab, A.D. 1231.”

In a letter to Isaac Morier, Esq., British Consul-General at Constantinople, he laments the untimely death of an African traveller of distinction, who died in Egypt:—

“I particularly lament the untimely fate of poor Seitzen, as I had many opportunities of admiring his zeal and great abilities during a residence of three years at Aleppo preparatory to undertaking his perilous travels in Africa and Arabia. With the deepest knowledge that books can confer, and the warmest zeal for the extension of the limits of science, he was rendered quite unfit for a traveller among barbarians by his total ignorance of the world and a want of promptitude and address in the common occurrences of real life.”

We are, however, indebted to him for the assurance that no venomous snake, except the adder, exists at Aleppo, among the great number of kinds of that class of reptiles. He was in the habit of paying handsomely for every specimen which was brought to him alive.

Just before Mr. Barker went to Europe, Lady Hester wrote to him, and sent him letters of

introduction to her friends and relatives in England. She says :—

“ MAR ELIAS, *March 21st, 1818.*

“ MY DEAR SIR,—

“ I have already told you I think you would not dislike Bath, and that it would answer to you in every way. I cannot say how much I am interested that your affairs of all kinds should go on well, and I hope you will write to me very, very often. I only lament that the world is not as I once knew it; then perhaps I could have served you as I wish, but all now is changed. Hospitality and true English customs are no more ; all is empty words, as I fear you will see. Things are quiet, they say, in France at present; but you know my opinions, so I need not repeat them. I shall ever bear in recollection, my dear Sir, the attention and kindness you have shown me, and I hope that all I have ever said to you in the sincerity of my heart you will consider as I intended it. I have taken care to say to my friends that your politics are unlike mine, and that we never had a dispute except upon that subject. I did this with a view that you should be thought a pure John

Bull politician, who makes a sort of Great Llama of every Government authorized by a King or Regent.

“I have received your letter of the 17th; and Ann¹ sets off to-morrow, leaving me very unwell. Since the death of the Princess Charlotte, I have so brooded over probable melancholy events, that it has injured my health extremely. Lord Melville, I find, has also ordered a frigate for me, but I am so low and so unwell, and so little capable of encountering all the fatigue I shall have to meet with without a doctor or any proper servant, that I think I shall give up going altogether.

“Pray write me very often,—at least, whenever you have a moment, if only a few lines. Make clear that we dispute about politics, in order that you may not make yourself enemies through being classed with me, whose politics are well known to all, and which can never change.

“Yours most sincerely,

“H. L. STANHOPE.

“Your letters of introduction are all put up

¹ A servant maid returning to England with Mr. Barker and his family.

in one packet. One for Mr. Coutts deliver or send to England by private hand when at Paris ; one send to Lafitte & Co., from Marseilles ; the other send to Monsieur Barbaud, to forward by land to Pisani."

In closing this chapter we cannot omit an interesting anecdote showing how persons in the *highest* ranks in life have it not, very often, in their power to assist their friends by procuring them posts under Government, from the peculiar nature of our Constitution. In a letter Mr. Barker writes to Henry Abbott, Esq., Clement's Inn, he says :—

"Lady Hester Stanhope told me a story of the Queen [Charlotte] having, in the time of Mr. Pitt, beaten at all doors in vain, for a *protégé* of Her Majesty's (an orphan of a cottager she had adopted in one of her promenades at Windsor), and that at last the Duke of York almost threw himself at her ladyship's feet to engage her to prevail upon Mr. Pitt to fulfil the Queen's wishes, and give the young man a place of £200 a year ; but he was inexorable, and said, 'I cannot afford it.' "

CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Barker's Voyage to England, May, 1818.—Loses a Mare by Death.—Quarantine.—The “Spoglio.”—Horses are Sold in France.—Travelling in France by “Berline.”—Arrival in England.—Journey to Wales.—Welsh and Maltese.—Eggs and Bacon.—Mr. Barker Petitions the two Companies.—The Levant Company allows him a Salary of £500, the East India Company £100.—Loss of the Ring.—Return to France.—Death of his Twin Daughters.—Return to Syria.—Lady Hester's Prophecy.—Its Apparent Fulfilment.—The Rev. Mr. Sloman.—Trouble Travellers give Consuls.—Count Rejouisky.

FOLLOWING up his intention of going with his family to England, Mr. Barker during the winter of 1817 made preparations for the voyage, (which in those days was a serious matter,) and purchased horses which he intended to take with him.

He obtained leave of absence from the Ambassador and the Court of Directors of the Hon. East India Company; and going down to Alexandretta, he embarked on board a sailing vessel in the month of May 1818.

Two months elapsed before he arrived at Malta, and there he was put into quarantine

for forty days, the time then enforced for ships with “foul bills of health.” One of his mares, the finest he had, and which he valued at £1000, died at Malta, from having been “suspended” to get her on shore; it seems she was with foal,—a circumstance ignored, because it is frequently the case with the finest breed of Arab horses that no visible symptom gives indication of this state, and many mares have been known to gallop *hours* the day before they foal. The Arabs distinguish this peculiarity in fine Arab mares by the expression “*Tuhmel il feloo fee sidrehah*” (“She carries the foal in her chest”).

After performing this long quarantine, he embarked his horses for Marseilles; and there on his arrival he was compelled to perform another, that is, a *second* quarantine of forty days, Malta having been, for his ill-luck, just declared plague stricken and “foul,” because General Sir Thomas Maitland, Governor of Malta, or “King Tom” as he was nicknamed, had, on his return to his post from England in a man-of-war which had touched at a port on the coast of Barbary, where the plague was raging, violated the “regulations” in his own person by performing the

“Spoglio,”—a contrivance unknown at that time, but since become familiar everywhere in the Mediterranean; and the sanitary authorities at Marseilles, who were exceedingly strict, did not admit of this manner of performing quarantine; which is simply plunging into a bath and putting on clean clothes. This constitutes the “Spoglio.” “Malta and its dependencies” was therefore declared “foul.”

Two months more elapsed before he was liberated from this tedious detention, and on the 26th September, 1818, he had the pleasure of finding himself a free man again, having been since the 9th May (four months; 138 days) on the voyage from Alexandretta to Marseilles; which is now performed by steam packet in seven or eight days.

But of this long period eighty days were spent in quarantine!

The approach of winter and the *delicate* situation of his wife induced him to pass the winter at Marseilles. He had, besides a large circle of acquaintances in that city, friends he had known for many years in Syria.

Early in the spring of 1819 his wife presented

him with twins—daughters. He sold his horses for £1,200, for he had been persuaded to abandon his intention of sending them to England by friends who wrote to him from London that the moment was not favourable for their sale in England.

The twins were put out to nurse, and he left, with his wife and three of his children, for Paris on the 4th March in a “Berline,” or travelling carriage and post horses, to which he had to have repairs made at Avignon, and again at Montelimart; in which last town he consoled himself for the delay by purchasing a quantity of “nougat,” for which the place is renowned, and sending presents to his friends at Marseilles, and to his mother-in-law at Aleppo.

The constant stoppages he was subjected to by the breaking down of the carriage, which occurred again before he reached Paris, prevented his reaching the capital before the 20th March. A fortnight was spent there in repose after the fatigue attendant on the jolting of the rumbling old vehicle, and in seeing the sights at Paris; and they did not arrive in London till the 4th April, where they went to pass a month

with his sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Maltass, at Balham Hill,—“ quite in the country ” then.

On the 9th May he took lodgings in Woburn Place, at that time a fashionable quarter, in order to be near the British Museum,—exactly a twelvemonth since he had left Syria. The month following he went down to Lau-renny in Wales, to visit his sister, Mrs. Grace Richards, and her worthy husband ; where he spent a month and a half, and in whose charge he placed his young children with a governess for their education.

He set off for London on the 9th August, with his wife, in a post-chaise, and was two days getting to Swansea. Between Carmarthen and Swansea they were obliged to put up at a village inn, where they could not find anything to eat except eggs and rancid bacon. This was a great trial to Mrs. Barker, who had never before been in such a predicament ; for in Syria abundance of provisions, sweetmeats, pastry, etc., of all kinds, are taken by travellers with them on a journey, which is looked upon as a party of pleasure. She had been in the habit of

never allowing a traveller to leave her house without cramming his servants' saddle-bags with provisions; and thus to be compelled to eat rancid bacon or starve was an episode in her life of a most unpleasant character. And what added materially to her discomfort was the circumstance of her husband's laughing at her being so much put out of her usual equanimity.

She was much surprised on this journey to find that the Welsh language in *sound* resembled Arabic so much that she tried to catch the words and to understand what was said, and could not believe for some time that the people were not speaking Arabic.

It is a remarkable circumstance that the Maltese language, which is *more than half Arabic*, resembles the dialect of that language spoken at Aleppo, and not that on the coast of Barbary,—which one would suppose, from the proximity, would have been the case. It seems that when Malta fell into the hands of the Mohammedan conquerors, the invaders had come from Aleppo, which was then the most polished and civilized city of the Saracen nations; and having established themselves there, took into their own

tongue by degrees the Italian of the Genoese and Venetians, and thus formed the Maltese language. Mr. Stoddart, son of the judge at Malta, having come to Aleppo, was forcibly struck by this fact.

In a letter Mr. Barker wrote to his sister, he says :—

“ I must not forget to tell you that near Swansea I saw a coal-waggon that goes on the iron road by the force of steam at the rate of three miles an hour. Judge if I am unreasonable in my expectation of living to see stage coaches propelled by the same means. I understand the invention of coal-carts is of twenty years’ standing. There is certainly considerable difficulty in adapting the machine to act as well in a hilly country as in a flat ; but all obstacles will in time be overcome, and people will be conveyed from London to Bath for half a crown ! *E viva il secolo diecinoovo.*”

From Swansea he took the stage coach at four o’clock in the morning, and arrived at Clifton at seven o’clock in the evening. From Clifton he went to Bath, and remained a week at Cheltenham, then to Oxford, and afterwards arrived in

London on the 1st September, taking lodgings in Holles Street, Cavendish Square.

In the meantime the East India Company and the Levant Company had resolved to reduce their establishments, and were on the point of abolishing his post at Aleppo altogether. He sent in memorials to the two Companies, laying stress on the very important services he had rendered them and the country during the war with France, one of the most signal being his "having been the first, by the methods he had adopted, to convey to India the news of the suspension of the peace of Amiens,"¹ whereby the surrender of Pondicherry to France was prevented, and the Government in India was enabled to take timely measures for the approaching war;" and his "having at his own expense continued patriotically to transmit between England and India the quickest information of the great events passing on the Continent, which proved of vital importance to the security and welfare of British interests in India." He humbly laid before them the assistance he had rendered

¹ A mention of this fact will be found in Macaulay's *Essay on Warren Hastings*.

to British trade and British travellers going to India during nineteen years, when “at the expense of his own private fortune¹ he had upheld the honour and credit of the British name in Syria,” etc.

On the 28th October he was in Great Coram Street, Brunswick Square, waiting very impatiently for the decision of the two Companies.

The Levant Company, more grateful for services rendered, and more liberal than the other, though they had not been so much benefited, decided, on the 18th November, 1819, to allow him a “salary of £500 sterling per annum, without any allowance for official or other charges of any description,” and that the “consulage collected at Aleppo and its dependencies shall be for account of the Company, and remitted half-yearly to their collector at Constantinople.”

The Honourable the Court of Directors for affairs of the Honourable the East India Com-

¹ The best proof of his having spent *all* his income in the service of the public is that at his demise his five children were left unprovided for, and had literally nothing but their mother's jointure to fall back upon, and the landed estate she left them in Syria.

pany, though his life had been more particularly devoted to their service and benefit, decided to allow him “£100 sterling per annum, for any services that he might be able to render them in Syria.” This sum was in reality considered in the light of a pension, and it continued to be paid to him after he had left Syria for Egypt, and to the day of his death.¹

He spent the winter in London, visiting his friends, unchecked by any circumstance of note, unless it be the following.

Dining one day at the table of Mr. Wm. Hamilton, of the Foreign Office, where a party of about twenty persons of the *élite* of society were assembled, one of the guests asked him to show a friend a ring he had on his finger, in which had been set an antique gem which had been valued at £60 or £70; he took it off his finger, and it went the

¹ But, taking into consideration the immense importance of the transmission of dispatches and letters to India during nineteen years (sometimes at very critical moments), for which our Government are glad *now* to pay yearly from £60,000 to £70,000, we leave the public to judge if the remuneration for such services was at all liberal, or even just.

round of the table, to be admired and allay the curiosity of the guests; but when he inquired for it again, it was not to be found, and was lost to him for ever; for it was of course impossible to say *where* it had stopped.

Leaving his children with his sister in Wales, he left London with his wife on the 18th March, 1820, for France, and after remaining at Paris till the 14th April, he went to Marseilles, and arrived there on the 25th April. Here he found that one of the twins had died, and the other was very sickly; and here again his wife presented him with a daughter, who was called Caroline; and on the 29th August they left Marseilles for Syria in a large French transport, the *St. Joseph*, Captain Roustan, belonging to the French Government, and going to Syria for horses. They arrived at Saida (Sidon) on the 17th September. Fanny, the other twin, died here on the 24th.

At Saida he had the pleasure of meeting Lady Hester Stanhope, who gave him a very good dinner, consisting of several Turkish and European dishes; knowing him to be a con-

noisseur of good cheer, she ordered her three cooks to pay particular attention to its preparation, and he declared she had outdone Cleopatra. Her health appeared then to be much improved. She told him prophetically that she foresaw that "he would have again to fly from his post; for that terrible things were to happen; that there would be much wailing and gnashing of teeth, and that at Aleppo not one stone would be left standing upon another."

This prophecy he laughed at, but it certainly was verified in part two years afterwards, when the great earthquake occurred, the worst which had been known to visit Syria for more than 500 years, and which caused so much damage at Aleppo and Antioch, where almost all the *old* houses were thrown down.¹

He left Saida for Latakia in a vessel he hired on the 3rd October, and after passing a few days at Latakia, they set off, and

¹ New and well built houses, and all which are built on vaulted crypts, like most houses at Aleppo, are never thrown down. The tall minaret of the Great Mosque, built 900 years ago, has resisted all earthquakes.

arrived at Aleppo on the 25th October, 1820, where he had the sorrow to lose one of his best and most faithful native clerks, named Nahoom, of typhus fever, a few days after his arrival. He felt deeply this circumstance.

While Mr. Barker was in Europe, his younger brother Benjamin, by his father's second wife, who was so called because he was the twelfth son, had charge of the packets for India, and his private affairs. During his absence many travellers came to Aleppo, and among them a Mr. Sloman, an English clergyman, of most eccentric habits and ideas. Frequently one meets in the Levant, Syria, and Egypt, very queer characters, and this gentleman was one. He had met at Latakia an Italian doctor, who had just arrived from Aleppo, and who told him that he had been robbed by banditti, and cautioned him not to go by the same road, but to take "the other." Mr. Sloman *did* take that road,—and met with the same fate. After a week's residence at Aleppo, he met the same doctor in the street, who had returned from Latakia, but by a dif-

ferent road. He began at once to belabour him with his stick, saying, "You rascal! you have been the cause of my having been robbed. Don't you know that travellers always do the contrary of what they are advised to do?" The doctor, a most respectable man, complained to Mr. Barker's brother Benjamin, but the reverend gentleman could not be persuaded that he had acted unjustly.

We heard afterwards that this same Mr. Sloman, while at Damietta in Egypt, in the time of the plague, went out into the bazaars, which were crowded, and struck out right and left with a thick stick on all who came near him, indiscriminately, both women and children, and soon found himself obliged to beat a retreat *backward* to the Vice-Consul's house, where he was lodging, pressed by the crowd on all sides, who would not accept his blows in good part. Arrived there, the Vice-Consul, Mr. Surur, came out to see what was the matter. Fifty voices cried out together; at last, when quiet was somewhat restored, and silence obtained, Mr. S. explained "that he was keeping a quarantine, and that the

wretches would not allow him to do so, and that, therefore, he was compelled to prevent their touching him by a stick." Mr. Surur would not have been able to persuade him had he not perceived that the Vice-Consul's interference in his behalf would not have prevented his coming off the worse in the conflict.

Many similar anecdotes are related of this gentleman and of many others. This is one of the disagreeable taxes imposed on Consuls in Turkey, that of listening to, and settling the differences of, eccentric and avaricious travellers, who give an immense deal of trouble, and sometimes waste the Consul's precious time in some very extravagant whim, or the attempt to evade payment of sums which in Europe they would have been compelled to discharge instantly without demurring. The Consular officer is expected by them to yield passively to their caprices, and be unjust to natives because he happens to be their countryman and to live in a country where they are not subject to its laws.

During Mr. Barker's absence, also, Count

Rejouisky, a Polish nobleman, came to Aleppo with letters of recommendation from the Russian and Austrian Ambassadors; and having a pleasing and insinuating address, obtained money from the Consuls to a large amount. He had with him a retinue of attendants and servants; gave balls and garden parties, and made presents to the ladies of valuable cashmere shawls. Not able to find a particular kind of shawl for a lady, he sent a Tartar to Damascus and obtained it. Some time after he had left Aleppo, the bills he had given came back protested, and on inquiry the Consuls and Jew bankers who had advanced him the money learnt that he really was the nobleman he passed for, but that his mother had refused to pay any more of his bills, and they never recovered a penny of the amount they had paid.

This is another of the many snares Consuls are liable to fall into; and sometimes they cannot avoid them. Mr. Durighello, the Spanish Consul at Aleppo, was continually recounting to Mr. Barker and to us the money

he had paid and lost, and the frequent pangs he endured every time he saw his fine shawls on the shoulders of the fair ladies who had become the lucky possessors.

CHAPTER XVI.

Revolt at Aleppo.—Three Pachas called in.—Great Destruction of Property.—Review of Turkish Rule.—Fundamental Difference between East and West.—Illustrative Anecdote of Jebräh.—Another of Abd il Hak's Peasants and the Muftee.—Story of Giorgios Abd il Noor.—Remedy for Turkish Misrule.—Right and Wrong.—Prestige is Life in the East.—Anecdote of Mr. Levinge.

THE townspeople of Aleppo were always ready to revolt against the Pachas (but not against the Porte, as was clearly proved in the revolt at the end of 1819, when the people took all the property of the "Hažnadar," the finance agent of the Porte, and all the Government property, and for greater security deposited it in the warehouses of the custom-house) whenever the tyranny and rapacity of these Pachas became unbearable. Whenever bread became dear, and consequently bad, and the taxes more onerous than usual, their leaders persuaded them to revolt. They did not reflect, nor would their leaders put it into their heads, that this tyranny was exercised in order that the

Pachas might have money to send to the Ministers at Constantinople.

This they did, as they had done so often before and since, at the end of 1819, against Khourchoud Pacha; who, unable to get the better of them, called in three other Pachas, among whom was Jelall il Deen Pacha, of whom we have spoken before, put down the insurrection, and decapitated some of the leaders, *as usual*, and the city returned to its ordinary state of half-rebellion; but not before great losses had been sustained to the value of many millions of piasters,—losses by burning down the bazaars, losses by suspension of business for several months, losses by the destruction of gardens, vineyards, olive trees, and pistacio-nut trees.

Mr. Barker says, “ You need not be alarmed for our safety, because we are accustomed to the government of the Janissaries, under which I have lived with security ten or twelve years, during which period the city was much more prosperous than it has been since the Pachas recovered their power.”

But every successive revolt impoverished the

inhabitants, and told cruelly on public prosperity; the Porte could no longer draw from them the immense sums it could not do without to enable it to carry on its habitual kind of government,—a jumble of heterogeneous conflicting elements, culminating in disorder for the benefit of Serraffs¹ and speculators. Orientals, and particularly Mohammedans (who gave the tone to the minds of the Christians and Jews, who, as Mr. Barker used to say, are only Turks who profess to believe in Jesus Christ or in Moses), have no idea of order; they cannot understand it; the very form of their Koran, written *piecemeal*, predisposes their minds from their infancy to *disconnection*, and the religious precepts all lean to the side of *irregularity*, to *uneven numbers*, because “God is an uneven number,” etc. And here is the difficulty and error into which Europeans fall. It is very erroneous to judge of the constitution of their minds by the criterion formed on the minds of Europeans; in almost all matters they are diametrically opposed. Again, another difficulty lies in the ignorance of Europeans in regard to

¹ Serraffs are Greek or Armenian bankers.

the *real* state of *morality*. The first have been brought up surrounded by moral restraints enforced by the strong arm of the law. In the East, nothing of the sort exists, nor has existed for centuries. The child is brought up in the constant atmosphere of venality, bribery, and *wrong*,—to lisp “Backsheesh” with its first effort at speech, and almost its first breath. The *first* idea which comes into the mind of an Oriental is, “How shall I be able to buy myself off?” or, “How shall I be able to buy such an one or thing off?” Money, or money’s worth, is the *only* morality known, because the strong arm of the law is not there to compel observance of any other. Persons are so accustomed to venality and corruption, that it does not excite the least sensation,—it is a thing of course. On the other hand, the morality of *female* chastity is more respected in the East than in the West, which has been brought about by centuries of usage, and by necessity.

Here is an anecdote illustrative of the way in which things are done, and for which we can vouch, having known the parties.

A Christian shopkeeper in a small way at

Aleppo in the Turkish Quarter called Bankoussa, named Jebrah, was troubled by a Mohammedan shopkeeper, not his neighbour, bullied and threatened, out of spite because he was thriving and the Mohammedan was not, by pretending that Jebrah owed him 1,000 piasters, whereas the poor fellow knew him merely by having seen him pass now and then his shop, but had never spoken to him in his life. This man, Topal Moossa, threatened him with a suitat law at the Mehkameh, and at the same time sent a person to insinuate and whisper in his ear that "less than 500 piasters he would not take," and that if he did not pay the money at the end of the week to the Mehkameh, he should be called from the part of the Kadee. The Christian knew that if this threat were carried into execution, two witnesses would be brought forward (of whom there are always several ready at the door of the Mehkameh, or Court of Law) to swear he owed the money; which would satisfy the Kadee's conscience; and the form required by law, and he would be condemned to pay the money or go to prison. Thousands like him

have paid and thought no more about it; but he was rather a shrewd fellow, and thinking upon the matter overnight, he hit upon a plan for escaping this *avania*.¹

He had rendered some trifling services to the chief of his Quarter Bankoussa, named Mohammed Aga Eb'n Makainsee, and to him he went. This man was a sort of lieutenant under the Civil Governor of the city, Babil-see, familiarly styled Mutzeleem; assisted in getting in the taxes, keeping the people in order, etc., but had no official position.

Watching an opportunity when no one was there, he prostrated himself on the ground, kissed the hem of his garment, and said, "Fee urd hareemak ya Aga" ("I conjure you by all that you hold most sacred"). "Speak," said the chief. He then related his case, and begged assistance. Mohammed Aga told him to go, and he would find a remedy.

The next day Mohammed Aga sent for the shopkeeper Topal Moossa, and said to him,—

"What is this I hear? You are going to

¹ Unjust extortion.

set yourself up for an Aga, you miserable reptile! You are going perhaps to declare yourself independent of the Porte? Are you a rebel? What are you?

The man replied, "What great crime have I committed that you should say so?"

"Why, I hear you have threatened the Christian Jebrah in our Quarter with a lawsuit. Now, everybody knows that this Jebrah cannot owe you 1,000 piasters, because you never had it to lend, unless you stole it. This makes me think you want to *avanise* on your own hook, and set up for an Aga. I cannot allow this spirit of insubordination to exist without nipping it in the bud. Go, and by this time to-morrow bring me here 500 piasters, or it will be the worse for you."

Topal Moossa thought while the chief was speaking that he would try what could be done by bullying and resistance; but he had an old stager to deal with, a hard man. Looking big, he was about to speak, when Mohammed Aga stopped him by saying,—

"I see mild measures won't do for *you*. I had better tell you at once that your name has

been sent in to me as one of those who pillaged the churches in the last revolution, and they talk of a ‘klaideh’ [a string of gold coins] worth 6,000 piasters, which you have concealed in the roof of your house. Tell us something about that.”

When the man heard this, his knees knocked against each other, and falling down, he intreated to be let off, promising not to molest the Christian. But the Aga was inexorable. The next day he brought the money, because he knew the chief had the power to get him exiled to Candia, and ruin him.

The Aga took the money, and said, “I’ll let you off this once, but if I hear any more of your doings I’ll make you disgorge the 6,000 piasters.”¹

Towards evening, when alone, he sent for Jebrah, and gave him 250 piasters, reserving the remaining 250 for himself, saying, “Now your trouble and my work have been paid for, and settled.”

Here is another case, not at Aleppo, but at

¹ This story he had invented, without any foundation, but he could very easily substantiate it if he chose.

Antioch ; thousands similar could be told in every part of the Sultan's dominions.

One of the Mohammedan peasants of our dragoman Abd il Hak, a landed proprietor of a small patrimony (as all the Antioch Christians are) at Souedeeyah, had engaged a girl for his son, rather prettier and richer than usual, which excited the envy of his neighbour, a peasant belonging to the Muftee of Antioch, a very rich landed proprietor, and of course, by his office, member of the Mejliss. This man said to himself, " Why should I allow this fellow, protected by a miserable Ghiaour, to lord it over me ? My master *can* give the girl to my son. Why not ? Is he better than I am ? "

An altercation ensued, and great rivalry and ill-feeling was excited between the relations of both parties, as usual ; for almost all the disputes among the peasants originate about girls who are engaged to be married.

The Muftee's peasant went to Antioch and "arranged" with the Muftee or his bailiff,—to whom probably he had brought a lamb, a calf, or something else, and promised more.

Abd il Hak's peasant was sent for to Antioch,

and thrown into prison. On our writing to the Muftee to ask what he had been doing, we received a *written* reply that he had taken the stones from the Muftee's hydraulic wheel, and made use of them to build his own house ; and 3,000 piasters were claimed as the value."

Now it was a notorious fact that this wheel had been discarded by the Muftee's father as useless about *thirty years before*, and not a single stone had existed in that place for at least *ten* years ; but we could not prevail on the least reduction, though we wrote more than one letter on the subject, and finally we were threatened with a Mazbata,¹ and that the claim against the peasant would be made heavier. Abd il Hak was compelled to pay the money ; which sum of 3,000 piasters he had to "place on his peasant's head," in addition to the debt which every peasant has, at 20 per cent. interest ; and probably a twelvemonth, or perhaps *two*, would elapse before he could, by very hard work, pay it off. The money no doubt went into the bailiff's pocket, for we hardly believe a millionaire like the Muftee would

¹ See ch. viii., p. 145, for an explanation of what a Mazbata is.

have touched so small a sum,—which, however, was a large one for the poor peasant; and the Muftee's peasant carried his point, and got the girl for his son.

Here is another. Giorgios Abd il Noor, one of Mr. Barker's "protected" at Antioch, a Christian, had a lawsuit with his brother-in-law Kaiouka, about some property in a mill, and this suit had been going on for more than ten years. Giorgios had the right on his side, and obtained decisions by the Kadees who successively came to Aleppo and Antioch, and firmans from the Porte to enforce their execution, pasted one near the other, ten yards long; but Kaiouka, being the richer of the two, was continually bribing the Members of the Council, and the Pachas at Antioch and at Aleppo, and *kept possession*. Giorgios bribed also, and nearly ruined himself by the sums he paid; but he would not give in, being a very obstinate man, and knowing he was in the right, and *hoping* something might turn up in his favour. A contention among the Members of the Council at Antioch, who were bribed, some by one, some by the

other, led to a division among them, as each espoused the cause of the one who paid him; and to such a point of rivalry and dispute, that the British Consular agent, Mr. Giorgi Adib, was on the point of being assassinated because he had taken Giorgios' part. He leaped out of the window and escaped to the gardens.

At last, one of the Members said in the Assembly, "Ouf! why should we be divided by these Ghiaours? Let us get the Muftee and Kadee to write out an *eclam* [or decree] that their death is lawful because they are putting dissension between true believers." Accordingly the document was written and signed, and they were "condemned to be put into sacks, and thrown into the river Orontes, as the death fit for such dogs." Fortunately for them that nothing in Turkey can be kept secret; they got wind of the thing, and escaped,—Giorgios to Latakia, and Kaiouka to Aleppo. A year after, when this had blown over, and the Member who had proposed the signature of the warrant for their death was dead himself, Giorgios Abd il Noor went to Aleppo

to recommence his attacks; and Kaiouka, who had frequently tried to poison him, and failed because Giorgios always carried with him an antidote which sufficed to counteract the poison till he could get milk,¹ which then was sure to remove all effects of it, and despairing of all chance of arrangement with such a pigheaded fellow, resolved to try the assassination plan.

At the time that he knew that his opponent would be compelled to go down to Souedeeyah for the silk harvest, he made a bargain with a vagabond irregular soldier (Bachibazouk),—a pest abounding in Turkey,—to go with Giorgios on the road, and assassinate him for the sum of 250 piasters, of which he paid him 100 down, and promised to pay the remainder afterwards.

Giorgios happened to be a jovial fellow,—“hail fellow well met” with all such people, and the two set off together, each on his horse, jogging along, and chatting very pleasantly, the Christian filling the pipe, and doing little services, as he had always been accustomed

¹ It is universally believed that a great draught of milk is an antidote to almost any kind of poison.

to do to Turks, whom he understood better than any man in Syria, and thus knew how to get along with them. The soldier after a while said,—

“Upon my word, it would be a pity to kill a man like you, for you are a trump—the best Ghiaour I ever met with.”

“How?” said Giorgios, “what do you mean?”

“Why, Kaiouka, that infidel dog, has offered me 250 piasters to cut your throat, and paid me 100 of them.”

“Oh,” said Giorgios, “is that all? Why do you now regret the bargain?”

“Because,” said the other, “you are a good fellow, the right man, and your adversary is a beast, and I regret that it is not him instead of you; and, you know, I cannot return the 100 piasters, for I have spent a part of the money. What is to be done?”

“Well, if that be all,” said Giorgios, taking out his purse, “I’ll pay you the 200 remaining, and save you the trouble of doing what is disagreeable to you.”

“That’s a good fellow!” said the other.

"You have got me out of a difficulty ; here's my hand, and we'll say no more about it ;" and they trotted on very happily together.

This system of Turkish administration had been going on for a long time, and instead of getting better was getting worse. It is not the slightest use to attempt to "reform" it without European supervision or assistance of some kind, if practicable ; because, supposing a certain measure of reform could be effected in the capital, with the present rulers, the provinces would always remain in the same state ; for the rich landed proprietors, who are *the real Executive*, by means of the famous Mazbata, as we said before, can counteract any such attempted reform, and nothing can be known at Constantinople of their doings, for they and the officers of the Porte hold together for their own private interests in amassing enormous wealth.

It is therefore imperatively necessary that a radical change be made in the constitution of the Mejliss ; that an *equal number* of Christians be associated with the proud Mussulman members, and that, if practicable,

a certain measure of supervision by *one* or *all* of the European Powers be placed as a check. What is therefore wanted is a *just* and a *strong* Government, like the Egyptian of Meh'med Ali and Ibraheem Pacha, when no bribery existed, and no “fanaticism” was permitted. We have seen, in another part of this book, that the Egyptian Government very soon put down fanaticism ; and it would have been an excellent Government, and the best that Syria ever had, if it had not been obliged to levy money and soldiers to maintain itself from being destroyed by the Ottoman.

What England is particularly interested in is, that as long as the present state exists in Turkey, we should maintain firmly our “rights” in the Capitulations, for giving them up would not benefit Turkey in any way, and would injure us in our prestige.

Right and Wrong are so confused in the minds of Orientals from the circumstance of Wrong being the rule, that Right is never thought of, and hardly understood. It is much the same in Russia, and must be so in all countries which have been for centuries under a despotic rule.

Mr. Barker's experience for fifty years in Turkey shows very clearly what little account the Turks make of Right, which means in Turkey Might; and the Turks laugh at Europeans who talk of their "rights," for, to their understanding, any one who does not avail himself of his Might is a fool, and they treat him with contempt,—for how can they believe this self-restraint proceeds from anything besides feebleness, cowardice, or ignorance?¹

Prestige, which means Power, is paramount in Turkey, in India, in China, and in all Eastern countries. *It is Life*, and life's worth. Everything depends on it—trade, commerce, well-being, money-getting, the welfare of our country and its dependencies, and the happiness of generations still to come.

In proof of what has just been advanced, we will relate what occurred in 1832 and 1833; a fact which can be attested by referring to the archives of the British Vice-Consulate at Cairo, for no doubt some record will have been kept of this remarkable case.

¹ Orientals cannot divest themselves of the feeling that those who do not speak their language are ignorant fools.

A gentleman of the name of Levinge, a man of fortune, travelling for his pleasure, engaged a “kangia,” or boat, to take him up the Nile, a Greek interpreter, and several boatmen. When he had gone up the river some way, he found no attention whatever paid to his wishes or his orders. He remonstrated with his interpreter, and asked why he did not compel the men to obey his orders, and received an insolent answer. The interpreter had discovered that he was of a mild, yielding disposition,—“very gentlemanly,” in fact, and he became over-bearing and insolent. Before the boat had reached its destination (too far for Mr. Levinge to return), the interpreter secretly incited the boatmen to bastinado his and their employer, which was accordingly done. On his return to Cairo, Mr. Levinge laid a complaint against the interpreter at the Vice-Consulate, who had the effrontery to deny the truth of this statement; but the boatmen, more truthful, confessed the whole thing, and said they were told to do so by the interpreter. The gentleman’s servant corroborated their evidence.

This will be called an extreme case,—and so

no doubt it is, but it points, on a small scale, to a moral of what must be expected of Orientals when they are not restrained by the fear which prestige alone conveys.

CHAPTER XVII.

Great Earthquake of 1822.—Horror of the Scene.—Mr. Barker's remarkable Escape.—His Description.—Subscription in England for the Sufferers.—He distributes a Part.—The Porte compels him to send back the remaining sum of £700.—First Appearance of the Cholera Morbus in 1821.—Its Course and Development.—March of the Plague in Syria.—Difference between the Two.—Dr. Wolff arrives at Aleppo.—His Goodness of Heart.—Sale of Bibles forbidden in consequence of Intrigues at Constantinople.—Waheed Pacha, the “Frank-hater.”—False Charges to extort Money from Consuls.—Character of Pachas.

IN a letter addressed to his sister Mrs. Richards, in Wales, dated 2nd March, 1822, Mr. Barker says :—

“ I am not harassed by thorns in my path, which, thank God, since my return to Aleppo, has been strewed with flowers, and I verily believe that Marianne and I enjoy all the happiness which can fall to the lot of human beings. A new flash of felicity blazes on the day we receive news of your welfare in the Cottage.”

Little was he aware of the trouble that was coming !

“ On the 13th August, 1822, at half-past nine

in the evening, Aleppo, Antioch, Idlib, Reehah, Derkoush, Armanas, every village and every detached cottage in the Pachalic, and some towns in the Pachalics of Damascus and in Mesopotamia, as far as Bagdad, were in ten or twelve seconds entirely ruined by an earthquake, and became heaps of stones and rubbish, in which, at the lowest computation, twenty thousand human beings (about a tenth of the population) lost their lives, and an equal number were maimed or wounded.

"The shock was felt at sea so violently within two leagues of Cyprus, that it was thought the ship had grounded. Flashes of volcanic fire were perceived at various times throughout the night, resembling the light of the full moon, but at no place, to my knowledge, has it *left* a chasm of any extent, although, in the low grounds, slight crevices were everywhere to be seen, and out of many of them water issued, but soon after subsided. There was nothing remarkable in the weather or state of the atmosphere. Edifices on the summits of the highest mountains were not safer than buildings situated on the banks of rivers or on the beach of the sea.

“Although slight shocks of earthquakes have been from time to time felt in this country, it is certain that for several centuries none had done any material damage, except one twenty-seven years ago, when a single town, Latakia, was partially thrown down. In 1755 an earthquake was felt at Aleppo and Antioch, which so alarmed the inhabitants that they all abandoned their houses for forty days; but very little injury was sustained, and no lives lost.

“The appearance of some very ancient edifices—as, for instance, the great minaret of the Great Mosque at Aleppo, which dates from the time of the Crusades—renders it probable that Syria has not suffered from a *great* earthquake since the memorable one recorded by Gibbon about twelve centuries ago, in which one-third of the inhabitants of Antioch perished, when that celebrated city was supposed to contain a population of from 700,000 to 800,000 souls; where ‘Christians’ had first their honourable denomination.

“Those whom it has pleased God to place in happier regions of the globe, can scarcely realize the idea of the desolation and misery

which are the effects of a widely-spread convulsion of the earth."

There is something really striking in Mr. Barker's words when he says that "when the return of day permitted a recognition of persons, *the survivors rushed into one another's arms, through very joy of continued existence.* This joy was quickly followed by most pungent woe. Habitations, friends, parents, children, husbands, wives,—lost! The earth trembling under the feet of those who were spared, from the 13th August to the 9th October, a dismal period of fifty-six days and nights, kept alarm and anxiety alive, and every moment when the earth shook they might fear would be their last. But many more were wounded, and full of agony with broken bones. The dying had little consolation except the prospect of quitting this woeful scene, and the survivors had full employ by the interment of the dead. To add to these distresses, the wretched Syrians had heard that the cholera morbus had manifested itself at no great distance from them, in Mesopotamia.

"I have called my escape from the jaws of death miraculous. We slept [Mrs. Barker and he] in the upper room, with the windows on the river [Orontes] at Antioch, the roof of which was supported by beams and planks, and covered by tiles. My wife and I were going to bed, and were partly undressed. The earthquake began by a moderate shake, like those which had preceded it, and which having passed over without damage, we flattered ourselves that this would do so likewise; but in a few seconds it increased, and the general crash was heard. At first the high wall of the battlements of the ancient city, on which part of our lodging rested, gave way, and immediately after its fall, a pause of a second flattered us with a hope that the shock was over; but it recommenced with additional force, and in two or three seconds more the four walls crumbled as if they were made of pastry, and, fortunately for us, fell *outwards*, and we found ourselves *gently* let down upon our feet, and on to the room below, close to the door, and under the lintel. I put my left arm

round my wife's neck, waiting in that position till a stone or beam should give us the death-blow. I felt consolation in that awful moment that we were destined to die in each other's arms, and to be buried in the same grave. 'Well,' I said, 'we must die; such is the will of God.' We tried in vain to open the door, blocked by large stones. The servants were all wailing together, and the noise made by the complicated cries of our neighbours was such that for a long time our voices could not be heard, and were disregarded. At last Hanna and Antoni came to our assistance, and forced open the door enough to admit of our getting out.¹ Luckily a lantern was hanging in the great apricot tree in the court of the house, and that light was afterwards the means of saving the lives of many of our unhappy neighbours, who could not have been taken out of the ruins till the morning if a light had not

¹ They were saved by having been just under the lintel of the door, which in Syria is composed of *thick beams*, going the whole length across, and being half a yard wide, sustained the whole weight of the stones above.

assisted the people in delivering them. Now what was the Power that commanded thousands of stones and beams to respect our bodies, and to break into a hundred pieces all the other movables in the chamber, which consisted of two bedsteads, two chairs, and a table? One poor man was from home; he came in the morning, and took out of the ruins the lifeless bodies of his mother, his wife, and his four children. Another, exulting in his own foresight for having retired to the gardens on the first shock, returned early in the morning for some trifling thing, and met his death when he thought the danger past. . . . Will the Grand Seignor's bowels yearn at last for his oppressed subjects that it has pleased God to visit with so dreadful a calamity? Will he not dispense, for a few years to come, with their contributions? Great as the evil is, it will be considered as nothing—nay, as a godsend—if it should be the cause of the people being released from the oppression of the Porte for two or three years only.

“The awful darkness of the night, the con-

tinuance of the most violent shocks at short intervals, the crash of falling walls, the shrieks, the groans, the accents of agony and despair, of that long night cannot be described. When at length the morning dawned, and the return of light permitted the people to quit the spot on which they had been providentially saved, a most affecting scene ensued. You might have seen many unaccustomed to pray, prostrate on their knees, adoring their Maker; others there were running into one another's arms. An air of cheerfulness and brotherly love animated every countenance. In a public calamity in which the Turk, the Christian, the Jew, the idolater, were indiscriminate victims or objects of the care of an impartial Providence, every one forgot for a time his religious animosities, and, what was a still more universal feeling in that joyful moment, every one looked upon the heaviest losses with the greatest indifference; but as the sun's rays increased in intensity, they were gradually reminded of the natural wants of shelter, and of food, and became at length alive to the full extent of the dreary prospect

before them, for a greater mass of human misery has been seldom produced by any of the awful convulsions of nature."

At Mr. Barker's solicitation, and on the reports he sent home, the Levant Company raised in London subscriptions for the sufferers, "to be distributed without regard to nation or religion." He received the money, 114,408 piasters, equal to £1,007 sterling, and began to distribute, and spent about 28,000, equal to £307.

But as soon as the Porte heard of this act, the Pacha of Aleppo was ordered to put a stop to it, because the Porte would not permit its subjects to be relieved by a foreign nation; and therefore he sent the greater part of the money back, that is, 83,600 piasters, equal to about £700.

Subsequently he received the following letter from John Theophilus Daubuz, Esq., Treasurer to the Levant Company :—

"LONDON, 2nd August, 1824.

"DEAR SIR,—

"I feel happy in being appointed by the Committee for the management of the subscription raised for the relief of the sufferers by

the late earthquakes in Syria, to convey to you a testimonial of the grateful sense entertained by the Committee for the part you have so kindly taken in endeavouring to promote the object of the subscription, expressed by the following resolution unanimously adopted at a meeting held the 15th June :

“ ‘‘That the thanks of this Committee are eminently due to John Barker, Esq., British Consul at Aleppo, for his humane, zealous, and able efforts to carry into effect the benevolent intentions of the contributors to the subscription for the relief of the sufferers by the earthquakes in Syria.’’

“ I cannot but regret the interposition of the Ottoman Porte to prevent its subjects participating in relief so humanely offered to them by a generous public.

“ The major part of the amount returned to my hands has been applied to charitable purposes here, very few persons having come forward to claim any part of their contributions, which, of course, they had the option of doing.

“ I remain, dear Sir,

“ Your very obedient Servant,

“ JOHN THEO. DAUBUZ.”

“In the summer of 1823 the cholera morbus appeared at Aleppo for the *first* time, and from the circumstances of its appearing at different places at the same moment of time, and its sudden cessation, it obtained the Arabic name, “Il howah, il usfar” (the wind, or blast, or yellow wind).

“In the summer of 1821 it broke out nearly at the same time at Bushire, Muscat, Bagdad, and Bussorah; having in the five previous years ravaged many parts of India, China, Siam, and Java. At Bussorah it carried off 18,000 persons in eleven days, among whom was the East India Company’s Resident, Claudius James Rich, Esq. From Bussorah and Bagdad it spread into Arabia and the desert of Nej’d; and from Bushire it passed into Persia, beginning at Shiraz, and going north the year after.

“In July 1822 it broke out at Moussul, where the seeds had been sown the year before; and having stayed there all the month of July, it got to Merdeen in August, to Diarbekir in September, to Orfa in October, and it reached Birijeek and Aintab in November simultaneously; but

when the cold weather in the beginning of December began, it ceased altogether everywhere.

"The following year, 1823, it appeared at Aleppo, in the month of July, and at the same time in some of the towns on the coast of Syria, Trepoli Road, Tortosa, etc., but did not extend its ravages there.

"Its march in some respects resembles that of the plague, with this difference, that it is both infectious and epidemic,¹ continuing its stay in the town, village, or district from thirty-five to forty-five days, and, like the plague, it leaves its seeds to be developed the following year.

"The following is the march of the plague in Syria, confirmed by years of experience :—

¹ In the Levant there never has been a dissenting voice to the assertion that the plague is *only* communicated by *actual contact*; Europeans who have "shut up" have invariably escaped it; and many facts could be brought to prove that the plague has been taken by touching a letter, or any other "susceptible" article.

A young lady at Aleppo caught the plague by drawing her coral necklace by a string, up to the terrace from which she dropped it. An apple drawn up in the same way communicated the plague to a child and its nurse, and the fact was recorded in the registers of the Consulate at Aleppo.

“ When the plague breaks out in the spring at Damascus, thousands of people fly and take refuge in Aleppo, in the course of the summer. They do not, however, communicate the disorder there, but they scatter, like the locust, its seeds in the city, and the following year, when the proper season for its development arrives, it *infallibly* germinates and proceeds towards the north, infesting in the same summer the neighbouring towns of Killis and Aintab, and only depositing the seeds of the contagion in the more distant towns of Armenia, to be depopulated in their turn when the pestilence has ceased in the places from which it was derived. It continues to advance by similar stages to Constantinople.

“ It has been remarked that the cholera, unlike the plague and the common fevers of the country, which invariably begin by previous indisposition, debility, loss of appetite, etc., gives no such warning, but attacks a strong vigorous man suddenly in the highest state of health.

“ Another *certain* peculiarity of the cholera is that during the thirty-five or forty-five days

of its visitation in the same locality, it is not of the same degree of virulence at the beginning and in its decline as when at its height, and may therefore sometimes admit of medical aid.

"It is said blood-letting, with large doses of decoction of mint and copious potions of pomegranate juice, have been found successful remedies. Another treatment is bleeding in the first stage and fomentation of the feet and legs, with a drink of the willow boiled in vinegar; but in the cases I had an opportunity of witnessing (1843), I am convinced no human aid could have stayed the hand of Death.

"It resembles the yellow fever in that all its victims are adults, and more frequently males than females.

"In the middle or height of its duration, most died soon after sunset, all before the morning."

The Court of Directors of the East India Company, by a letter dated the 2nd May, 1823, presented Mr. Barker with £200 gratuity as a remuneration for his services since the

abolition of his post at Aleppo as salaried agent, and confirmed the pension they had before allowed him of £100 per annum.

It was in January 1824 that Mr. Barker formed the acquaintance of the Rev. Joseph Wolff, and laid the foundation of a friendship which lasted all their lives. In all Dr. Wolff's travels in the East they were thrown much together, and a mutual esteem for one another ripened into a lasting friendship. Dr. Wolff had the intention of founding an establishment at Aleppo for the missionaries, in which he was heartily joined by Mr. Barker, and they sent an express messenger to Beyrouth, and wrote to Messrs. King and Fisk, American missionaries, urging them to come to Aleppo, and make that city the field of their labours instead of Jerusalem; but unfortunately Mr. Fisk died, and other events occurred to prevent Mr. King doing so. Dr. Wolff left Aleppo for Bagdad, and took with him from Mr. Barker letters of recommendation to Colonel Taylor, the Resident at that time there.

In a letter to Henry Drummond, Esq., written a year afterwards, Mr. Barker evinces a far-

seeing appreciation of his friend's character :—

“ The justness of your observation respecting Wolff's want of knowledge of the ways of the world must strike every one who has the slightest connexion with him. It reminds me of the poet's praise of his brother bard—

‘ In wit a man, in simplicity a child ;’

and serves to set in a most amiable light his piety, his zeal, and his truth.

“ His heart will bleed when he receives the melancholy news of the untimely decease of one of his dear fellow-labourers in Palestine, poor Fisk, whose death is so justly and so generally deplored.”

In a letter to a friend, dated 10th June, 1824, two years after the earthquake, he says :—

“ The intrigue and cabal which Mr. T. M. mentions in the conduct of their affairs [the Levant Company], I had an opportunity of noticing when I was in London. Will you believe it, that till now I have not received a word of consolation from the Levant Company for all my losses and sufferings from the earthquake ? Is that acting with the feeling and generosity

that ought to actuate the proceedings of a British public body? After a complete cessation of fifty days the earthquakes have recommenced. We have had lately within three days seven or eight shocks, one of which, on the 7th inst., was so sharp as to create considerable alarm."

The alarm was short-lived. Little shocks of earthquakes are exceedingly common all through Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece. In Mr. Barker's diary a notice of a hundred or more in his lifetime will probably be found; but a general *severe* earthquake occurs at 500 or 600 years' interval. The last, in 1872, which came exactly fifty years after the great one in 1822, of which we have spoken, is *the* exception, being the only one in 2,000 years which has come thus. The miraculous escape from destruction by the earthquake made a great impression on Mr. Barker's mind. He says to Mr. Samuel Barker:—

"Alep, 7th August, 1824.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—

". . . If I live a few years longer

I shall have the means of completing the education of my children, and this is the sole object of my worldly solicitude. I find the older and the poorer I grow, the more happy I am. In the vanity of my soul I dreamt of acquiring wealth enough to enable me to spend my eve of life in England, and sometimes my imagination wantoned in the still more visionary scheme of one day distinguishing myself by some literary production.

“But those transient ideas stir up in me no more vain ambition. My life was to have ended when so many of my fellow-creatures found an untimely grave in the ruins of the earthquake. It so pleased God that I survived that awful moment. Life is a free gift of the Creator, for which we ought all to be thankful; but the peculiar favour of existence has struck so forcibly that moment upon my heart, that I am determined to let no portions of it slip by in the painful watchings of ambitious projects. I will henceforth live only to be content with my lot, and to praise God for all His bounties.

“Adieu, my dearest brother. Remember me

kindly to our venerable parent, and believe me to be what I am most truly,

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ JOHN BARKER.”

It is very much to be regretted that he gave way to this idea, and did not apply himself to diplomacy, for which he was eminently fitted; for with his abilities and active turn of mind he would greatly have distinguished himself, and his country would have benefited by his talents and experience.

About this time the Pacha of Aleppo received orders to sequester all the Bibles and books of the Bible Society, and Mr. Barker writes to his brother at Constantinople, who was employed by the Bible Society to distribute their books:—

“ MR. BENJAMIN BARKER,

“ Constantinople.

“ ALEppo, 30th July, 1824.

“ MY DEAR BEN,—

“ . . . I cannot express my anguish at this unexpected thrust. If I had not some hope that the firman was issued without Lord Strangford’s¹ participation, I should be

¹ British Ambassador at Constantinople.

still more indignant at this triumph of the Roman Catholic Mission at Constantinople, which casts so foul a stain upon ours. Will the British public tamely suffer so egregious an insult? Can it be borne that Catholic potentates should have the privilege of maintaining and protecting an army of priests dispersed through every part of the Grand Seignor's dominions, while to the subjects of the King of Great Britain it shall be forbidden to furnish the Rayahs with the Book on which is founded their religion? What will the Bible Society think of the position we hold among the nations when it learns that while the Catholic priests in Turkey possess everywhere flourishing seminaries and convents like castles, and carry on with security their daily intrigues for the conversion of heretics, a Protestant itinerary missionary shall not be allowed to give the simple texts of the Gospel to the native Christians? And is such an act to call forth the jealous policy of the Porte, while for two centuries it has given every facility imaginable to the means by which Catholic priests have become the masters and tyrants of the

consciences of a hundred thousand of its subjects ? Let us trust that our Government will be convinced that this is a proper occasion to call forth all its energies, and that it will be prepared, rather than fail in obtaining full satisfaction for the insult, to use the *ultima ratio*, which, in my humble opinion, ought to have been used long ago in our diplomatic relations with the arrogant and despicable Divan."

A certain Waheed Pacha came as Governor of Aleppo. He had once been Rais Effendee, or Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Ambassador at Paris, and was consequently a "Frank-hater ;" because it has been remarked that Turks who go to Europe invariably become more inimical to Europeans than others. Mr. Barker says :—"I never saw a Turk who had been in Europe, who became more friendly to Europeans. This Pacha wrote to the Porte, and complained that "the English Consul was building a fortress at Soue-deeyah on his wife's estate ;" which charge compelled Mr. Barker to write many letters and send documents to Constantinople to prove that this accusation had not the shadow of truth.

This frequently happens when a fanatical

Pacha comes to a new post, and is done sometimes merely to extort money; he wishes to feel the pulse of the consular corps, and see if by bullying he cannot get something out of some of them. This plan sometimes succeeds with Consuls of foreign Powers,¹ who are not well protected by their Governments, and who must pay for everything, and even buy their rights, when they find it cheaper to pay *him* than the dragomans of their Embassies at Constantinople. For, as a French Consul once said: “Les Consuls Juifs d'Alep sont une source intarissable de profit pour les dragomans à Constantinople.”

However violent and hostile a Pacha may have been at first, this is no obstacle to the greatest apparent cordiality afterwards. Pachas in office are all cast in the same mould: exceedingly polite, very sharp in business matters, great sticklers for etiquette, weighing the most trifling incident in the nicest scales, and drawing conclusions accordingly.

The fortress turned out to be built of bricks and plaster!

It is customary, when a Pacha or a Grand

¹ In general, this refers to past times.

Vizier arrives in a town, that all the persons of note in the place should send him presents called a “Bokjay”¹ (bundle tied up), containing shawls, brocade gold stuffs, silks, jewels, etc. The father of one of the Aleppo grandees wrote to his son from Damascus : “The Grand Vizier will soon be with you; prepare the Bokjays.” These cost frequently £100, sometimes more—all money taken from the people, for in Turkey there is no other source of wealth for officials.

Abdallah Pacha, of Acre, at the very same time brought an accusation against Mr. Peter Abbott, British Consul at Beyrouth, which looks like a preconcerted plan laid to bring the British name into disrepute ; not at all impossible.

To Mr. Consul Abbott Mr. Barker says:—“Unhappy, indeed, would be the lot of an English Consul if the fear of incurring a Pacha’s displeasure should have any influence on his conduct ; or if he could not safely contemn an impudent assertion unsupported by a shadow of evidence. For my part, I should be loth to fill a public station under such humiliating circumstances.”

¹ “Bokjay” means a square wrapper, in which anything is tied up.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Arab Horses.—Speed and Endurance.—A Race by Fathallah Caralée.—Mr. Barker goes into the Desert to Purchase a Horse for the King of Würtemberg.—Four Shares in a Mare.—The Horse Stolen, and Returned.—Deterioration of the Breed.—Arab Knowledge of Horseflesh.—Arab Anecdotes.—Names of the Arab Tribes and Horses.—Difficulty in Procuring Fine Horses.

FROM Mr. Barker's long residence in a city so close to the desert, he had many opportunities of studying the matter of Arab horse lore, and the "good points" of the animal, which he declared were nearly the same in English as in Arab estimation, when the superstitious prejudices of the latter are set aside. The qualities requisite in a horse must be much the same in all countries ; but the Arabs pay more attention to the power of endurance, which, to them, is an absolute necessity in their mode of life in the desert. This name of "desert" is very apt to give a false impression of the country of the Arabs ; it is by no means barren, but composed of very fine, light soil, which furnishes abun-

dantly fine pasturage for horses, camels, and the thousands of sheep which produce the fine butter exported to all parts of Turkey, and forms the principal food of the tribes.

Speed and endurance, with them, are the two first points, on which the safety of the rider depends. One day a Christian jockey of Aleppo, but whose mother was an European, named Fathallah Carallee, accustomed to Arab life from his infancy, had laid a wager that his mare would arrive at Aleppo before any other, provided he had the start for a certain distance. The wager was taken ; the whole tribe, defied, were piqued, and resolved to win. He was as good a rider as any of them, and he knew his mare had the quality of speed, but not endurance. The distance agreed upon was not great—about four or five miles ; on which advantage he reckoned,—as they did on his having a heavy Osmanlee saddle. In a long race he would not have had a chance, for their animals are always in wind by constant exercise.

When he had reached the point agreed upon, the Arabs set off in pursuit, and he perceived they gained on him ; he pinched his mare's ears,

she redoubled her pace, and he had an advantage ; the Arabs gained on him again ; fearing he would lose his wager, he took out his knife, cut the girths of the saddle and crupper, got on his mare's neck for a second while he pushed the saddle over her tail, and, getting rid of that encumbrance, the mare "flew" with him, and he distanced them,—much to their disgust, for with a shout they gave up the contest.

Mr. Maseyk, the Dutch Consul at Aleppo, had received a commission from his brother to buy a horse for the King of Würtemberg, and being old and feeble, transferred this very difficult commission to Mr. Barker, who undertook it to please him ; for going at that season of the year into the desert was by no means a pleasant undertaking.

" HENRY MASEYK, Esq.,

" Marseilles.

" ALEppo, 16th May, 1825.

" MY DEAR SIR,—

" I informed you by my letter of the 29th April, that, agreeably with your desire, I had undertaken to carry into effect the King of Würtemberg's orders respecting a horse and

a mare, the execution of which your brother had begun, but had been prevented from completing by ill health.

" It appeared from the note of the commission given you by His Majesty's *aide-de-camp*, that a mare was not what he wished to procure in the first instance; that the principal object of His Majesty's desire was to have a superior stallion of the highest breed of Arab horses; to measure five feet or more, not to be less than four or more than eight years old. The colour was also indicated. A first-rate horse was never obtained from the Arabs for less than 6,000 piasters in the deteriorated piaster of to-day, of which ten go to a Spanish dollar. I paid in 1818, when that coin was worth only five piasters, 5,500 piasters for a mare, which consequently stood me in 11,000 piasters of the present currency; and for a colt of three years old, in the same currency, 6,500 piasters.

" Not being able to confide in the judgment of Michail Diab, nor of any other person, I resolved to go myself into the desert, and buy the best horse that could be found among a numerous tribe of Anazee Arabs, called

Fedaän, which was encamped at eight hours' distance from the city. My first care was to engage a Janissary of the name of Abou Fedawee, who has dealings with the Arabs, to procure me an Arab of the Anazee tribe, for my safe conduct.¹

"On the 1st instant I set out, accompanied by the Janissary, the Anazee Arab, an Arab of Zor, on the Euphrates, whose profession is to buy horses from the Arabs, and one servant. I expected to have been absent only three days, but not finding among the Fedaän a horse to my mind, I was insensibly led on, from encampment to encampment, for seven days, till I had got to the east of Homs, not far from Palmyra. I was on the point of despairing of success in my pursuit, when I accidentally heard of a famous stallion of the celebrated breed of the 'S'baä,' 'as tall as a camel' ['Mittle Gemal'], rising five, a chestnut without any white on his legs or feet; but the Arab who had in-

¹ He could not have ventured into the desert without having *one* of the tribe, which happened to be on the road, eating bread and salt with him, and becoming his "brother."

advertently let fall a word to intimate that such a horse there was, repented of his imprudence, and instead of directing us to where the horse was, did all in his power to prevent my getting a sight of him; every other Arab to whom we applied for information as to what part of the desert the owner of the Seglawee stallion inhabited, not only refused to satisfy our enquiries, but used every stratagem to send us in a wrong direction. Even boys of sixteen and twelve years of age we met occasionally tending sheep at a distance from the encampments, were so much on their guard that we could not surprise one into a confession favourable to our researches. At last we wandered up and down among the tents, trusting that chance would throw the horse in our way; and after two days' rambling we accidentally came upon the tent before which the horse was tied.

"He struck me at first sight as the very finest Arab horse I had ever seen, and I was confirmed in that impression the more I examined him in detail; and when I had seen five colts of his get, and his mother, I was

resolved in my mind to buy him though he should cost 20,000 piasters.

"Nothing can be more perfect than his mother nor more perfect than his progeny. I spent two days in treating for him, or rather in persuading the owner to consent to treat with me; for he repeatedly declared that nothing should induce him to part with his horse,—a resolution which a hundred Arabs interested in such a stallion remaining among them endeavoured to make him maintain. I began to apprehend I should not be able to get the horse unless by the sacrifice of such a sum as was never yet given for an Arab horse; but by bribing his two brothers, his wife, his mother, and one of his intimate friends, I at length obtained him for about 7,400 piasters; a sum which will be thought very moderate, considering that he is the only superior horse I found among two thousand.

"It must also be remembered that the owner had a revenue of about 2,000 piasters a year by him for covering mares, and that by selling him he deprived himself of the inestimable advantage of having his own mares covered.

He covered four in my presence, and there were five in waiting when I left him. His mother is a very dark chesnut, without any white spots upon her. The Arabs take the race from the mare, and not from the stallion, although in this case the horse is *Seglawee Gedraän* from both father and mother. I have already said that he is the finest horse I have seen in Arabia; I must add that he is also the tallest and most powerful, although he does not stand quite five feet in his shoes. Being a day's journey from Hamah (four from Aleppo), I engaged the Arab to conduct his horse to the vicinity of that place, in hopes of being able to procure the money of the purchase there; but having failed in that expectation, I left the Arab of Zor, who had been the mediator or broker in the bargain, to remain with the horse, while the Janissary and I and the Anazee Arab came to Aleppo, where we arrived after an absence of fourteen days.

“Yesterday my servant and the same Arab set out with the money for Hamah.”

[Take note that here a considerable sum of money was sent by two men alone in the desert,

because one was the “brother” of the tribe, and could not be robbed.^{1]}

In this expedition he saw a mare sold by an Arab to four other Arabs of another tribe, who each “bought a leg,” that is, a fourth share in her, for the sum of £1,000 sterling, in camels and sheep. When the bargain had been concluded, the other Arabs of his tribe came to him, and pretended to spit on him, saying, “Are you not ashamed to allow such an animal to go out of our hands?” The Arab pleaded in extenuation of his guilt that he possessed her sister, equally good for breeding, though not so swift. These four Arabs bought her on speculation; for being known to be the swiftest mare in the desert, they were sure of carrying off much plunder without fear of being overtaken, independently of her breeding fine colts, or fillies, worth a large sum of money; and if she lived four years longer, each was sure of *one* of her progeny. The Arabs

¹ One man of a tribe is sufficient safeguard against being robbed by any of his “brothers.” Should any other tribes be on the track, an Arab from each of those tribes must be procured, who eats bread and salt with you, and becomes your “brother.”

draw lots for the chance of the first, second, third, and fourth year; and if during the year allotted to one of these four, the mare bring a *filly*, the prize is worth all the money paid. It is on this account the Arabs never sell their *good* mares to Europeans, or those likely to take them away from the desert.

In a letter to his brother he says:—"I was extremely pleased with the Arabs; they deserve all that has been said of their hospitality, their regard for their pledged word, their perfect good sense, and good breeding. I never saw a more polite people in my life. They are in every respect the exact reverse of the Turks and Turkomans.¹ The only things that I found extremely disagreeable while I was among them were, that, not having a tent of my own, I was devoured by vermin that I acquired under theirs, and it was impossible for me to swallow one mouthful of their food, on account of the filthiness of their bowls and platters, so that for a week I lived on coffee and biscuits. They themselves live entirely on mutton flesh and

¹ These are proverbially treacherous and false, of which thousands of instances could be cited.

camel's milk, which last I found very bad flavoured, and bitter, on account of the animal feeding so much on poppies : I could not drink it."

The reader may like to know the sequel. The horse was paid for and sent ; but a neighbouring and *friendly* tribe, who had heard of the sale, lay in wait, and took him from the men sent. The tribe S'baä, from whose possession he had come, would have considered their tribe dishonoured for ever if the horse were not delivered in Aleppo, and immediately made war on these marauders ; and a month was passed in threats and fighting and pillaging one another, till at last peace was made, and the horse given up and sent to Aleppo under an escort.

We transcribe a part of the disbursements made, to show how such a purchase is effected.

Account of the Cost and Expenses incurred for an Arab Horse for His Majesty the King of Würtemberg, from the 24th April to the 9th July, 1825 :—

	Pias.	Paras.	Piasters
Cost of a chesnut horse, 4 years old, 5 feet high, of the breed Seglawee Jedraän, with a star in his forehead			7,100
<i>Carried forward</i>	7,100

	<i>Pias.</i>	<i>Paras.</i>	<i>Piasters</i>
<i>Brought forward . . .</i>			7,100
For two loads of wheat agreed upon with the owner, over and above the price fixed	240	0	
For cost of a dress purchased for him, over and above the price fixed	36	0	
For cost of a cloak (in cloth) for him, over and above the price fixed . . .	31	0	
For cost of a present made to his brother	250	0	
„ „ of a chemise for his wife . . .	26	0	
„ „ of a dress for his mother . . .	18	20	
„ „ of a dress for his son	21	0	
„ „ of 3 pairs of boots, 6 lbs. of coffee, 10 lbs. of tobacco, 75 pipe- bowls, 2 cloaks, handkerchiefs, biscuits, etc., presented to several Arab chiefs on the occasion	266	19	
Presented to Eb'n Fedawee, Aleppo Janissary, who accompanied Mr. Barker	250	0	
Presented to Abou Saleh, Arab of the Zor, who went with the servants and money	200	0	
Presented to Kassab, another Arab, who accompanied the servants to Hamah	182	0	
For the price of $4\frac{1}{2}$ yards of cloth for his wife	82	30	
Presented to Selim Kaplan at Hamah, in whose house the servants re- mained eight days	150	0	1,708 29
<i>Carried forward</i>			8,803 29

	Pias.	Paras.	Piasters.	
			8803	29
<i>Brought forward . . .</i>				
Presented to the nephew of Shaykh Dowahee, who accompanied the horse from Hamah to Idlib . . .	40	0		
To the Arabs who had robbed the servants, on returning their clothes .	36	5		
For the price of a skull-cap, turban, and boots they would not return . . .	50	0		
For hire of three horses for servants and one for Arab	96	0		
For food for the horse and the men 16 days	163	20		
For an escort of armed peasants . . .	108	0	493	25
	Piasters . . .		9,297	14

Here follow the expenses incurred for the keep and other items, and two grooms who went with the horse, a mare, and a colt, to Constantinople and Stuttgart, amounting altogether to 18,380 piasters.

By his visit to the Arabs he learnt the difficulty of procuring fine Arab horses, which has become much greater since 1825, whilst the prices have enormously increased. On this subject he says :—

“People in England have no idea of the trouble and expense we must incur to procure

a fine horse in this country. They seem to imagine that there is in Arabia a *race of perfect horses*, and that therefore you have nothing to do but to get one of that breed, without much regard to anything else. They appear not to know that although a horse possessing every requisite for a race-horse stallion may be more easily found in the deserts of Arabia than in any other part of the world, perfection in size, figure, bone, and action is extremely rare even there, and, therefore, cannot be obtained for the price of an ordinary hunter in England. Our last Pacha, with all his power and influence over the Arabs, was obliged to *buy "a force d'argent"* his finest horses, and to my certain knowledge he often paid 7,000 or 8,000 piasters, and once 12,500, for a mare. Such horses, however, as these were never sent to Europe. Within the last twenty years the Russians, Prussians, Austrians, and French, have carried away from Aleppo several strings of a dozen horses each, but which never cost more than from 2,000 to 3,000 piasters, or £70 to £100, each, —a price for which a first-rate Arab horse cannot be had in this country. The French Consul at

Aleppo sent last year two horses as a present to the Duc D'Angouleme, which could not have been sold here for £30; yet to my utter astonishment they proved, to use the expression of the *premier Ecuyer*, ‘l'ornement du Haras de son Altesse.’”

There is also a very important circumstance to be taken into consideration, which tends to diminish the beauty and perfection, and indeed to prevent the progress of the Arab horse towards excellence; a fact which we have heard Mr. Barker frequently regret, and which would long ago have rendered that animal a very ordinary one, were it not for the remarkable climate in which he lives, to which cause must be mainly attributed his beauty and fine qualities. We refer to their ignorance of the “get;” by which we mean the peculiarity attached to the circumstance that in this animal nature has made an exception, and caused all colts produced by a first-rate stallion to be equally good, provided the dam be equal, *ceteris paribus*. I mean this, that whenever a stallion produces a colt which becomes a much finer horse than himself—improved, in fact—he will always do the same.

Now, the Arabs ignore this fact of the “get;” they look to the *breed* only, and to their mares, which they suppose to be the cause of their possessing fine animals, and they use any horse provided he be of the *breed*. In this no doubt they frequently mistake, for a mare will not always do as they wish, independently of the risk they run that the mares communicate to their offspring their own defects, while the father, not having the quality of the “get,” cannot improve the breed. This is why the greater part of the horses in Arabia are worthless, full of defects, and generally *small*, and not one in a hundred fit for an European stud.

There is no doubt the climate is the Arab’s great auxiliary, for their horses, always out in the open air, are never cleaned nor curry-combed, and yet their coat is as glossy, smooth, and clean as possible; but a month after being kept in a stable, they lose that appearance of perfect health, and require daily curry-combing.

The horses for the king—a mare and a colt—were sent in charge of two Armenian grooms; and an English gentleman, Dr. Bromhead, who happened to be going to Constantinople, offered

to go with them. This gentleman caught cold by bathing in a spring at Aleppo, and was in consequence so ill on the road that he died between Adana and Koniah. The Pacha of Koniah detained the grooms and horses until a person was sent from the part of the German Ambassador to receive and conduct them to Constantinople. The horses ultimately arrived at Stuttgart, but one of the grooms died on his return from Constantinople.

I must not forget to say that the principal chief of the tribe took a fancy to the sword worn by one of Mr. Barker's servants, and was promised that it would be given to him. On Mr. Barker's leaving, he reminded the dragoman, or rather the Aleppo Janissary, of the promise. "How?" said the man to him; "would you have it said that you extorted anything from your guest?" "You are right," said the chief; "I will wait till the horse is at Aleppo;" and then he got the object he coveted.

The Arabs have wonderful ability in discovering of what particular breed horses are. We had a mare sent to us, it was believed, from Moussul, of pure Arab breed, who it was thought

had been covered by a famous horse called “The Orfalee.” When she foaled in the gardens at Aleppo, where the horses were out at grass in the spring, the Bedouin dependent of Ali Pacha, who happened to be there, saw the foal, and said immediately, “This colt is *not* the son of the Orfalee, but of some other horse ; I know this by his ears.”

Puzzled at this, I wrote to the person at Moussul who had sent me the mare, and learnt the Bedouin was right,—“he was not the son of the Orfalee.”

Here is another instance. This same Ali Pacha Sherayeff Zada, a Grandee of Aleppo, went with the volunteers to the Danube against the Russians, and took with him a colt three years old, carried away by the Arabs in a raid on another tribe near Hamah, and sold to him. On his return from the war, three years afterwards, this animal, then grown to be a fine horse, of very different appearance, came back with him. Some Bedouins who came accidentally into the courtyard, where twenty other horses were tied with this horse, cried out at once, “Why, that’s the colt carried away

from Hamah." He had no particular colour or mark on him; they recognised him from his shape and breed.

"The best race, or breed, of Arab horses are called 'Nedjdee,' and are bred by various tribes, whose names are herein specified, inhabiting the desert near Palmyra, and subject to a prince called Mehanna il Fadel. The generical name of these Arabs is Anazee; but it must be remarked that a great number of other tribes, who possess the deserts in the vicinity of Bussoarah and Bagdad, are also called Anazee Arabs, but their breed of horses is infinitely inferior to those belonging to the tribes dependent on the above-mentioned Prince."

Names of the Tribes under Prince Mehanna il Fadel.

Il Hesseno.	Il Selamat.
Il Feda n.	Il Seba.
Il Shemsee.	Il Moo-ay-gee.
Il Resasein.	Il Shumlan.
Il Geheyem.	Il Modayan.
Il Gelass.	Il Subhaan.
Il Sewalme.	Il Messaliouk.
Il Bedoor.	

Names of the Breeds of the Horses of those Tribes.

K'hail ¹ il Ajee-ouz,	The Old Lady's K'hail.
K'hail il Bedou,	The Bedouin K'hail.

¹ "K'hail" means "black-eyed."

Hadban,	The Humpbacked.
Shouayman Sebbâh,	The Swimmer.
K'hailan Hellawee,	The Sweet K'hail.
Eubayan,	The Cloak.
Toeyssan,	The Kettle.
Reeshan,	The Feather.
Freygian,	The Rescue.
K'hail abou Määreff,	The Sagacious K'hail.
Abou Arkoob,	The Labyrinth.
Meshreff,	The Explorer, or Scout.
Jeraddan,	The Grasshopper.
Il Swaytee,	The Renowned.

Names of the most esteemed K'hail Breeds.

K'hail il Deyjiânee,	The Fine-eyed K'hail.
K'hail il Jioulfee,	The Heavy K'hail.
K'hail il Seglawee,	The K'hail of the City of Seglawee
K'hail il Seydee,	The Fortunate K'hail.
K'hail il Manakee.	The K'hail of the Town of Manakee.

A grandee of the district of Bagdad had been in the desert one very hot day, and was approaching the city at noon on his return, exceedingly thirsty; his throat was so parched he could scarcely speak. On approaching a well he saw a very old gipsy woman with a small pitcher, and he asked for water. She gave him the pitcher, and he turned it round and round, for it was so black and dirty that he was loth to put it to his mouth. Perceiving at last a small part

where the rim had been broken off, he applied his lips to that place as the cleanest. After having drunk, the old woman, who looked like very old parchment, the wrinkles in her face being filled up with dirt, said to him,—

“ Tokburnee¹ ibnee, int il ughree mittlee ? hai muttrahee ” (“ May you bury me, my son ; are you then like me ? I always drink from that place ”).

Here is another story.

A good man, on his deathbed, called his son, and said to him,—

“ I was born to no inheritance, but the observance of the maxims I am going to impart to thee have stood me in the stead of riches and honour—

“ Eat only honey ;

“ Never sleep but on a bed of down ;

“ Build a house in every city.”

After his death his son, unable to divine his father’s meaning, went to a Shayk’*h* (a learned man), and asked him to interpret the meaning of his father’s maxims.

¹ “ Tokburnee ” is an expression of endearment, generally used towards children ; but it really means, “ May you bury me ! ”

The Shayk'h said, "By eating only honey, he meant,—Never eat but when you are hungry, for then your appetite will cause all to appear honey to you.

"And if you never lay down to sleep except after a hard day's work, the ground will appear to you to be a bed of down.

"These two were his maxims for preserving your health. Now for the last, having regard to your fortune.

"By building a house in every city, he meant you should make yourself so many friends that you will always find a welcome and assistance wherever you go."

In a letter written subsequently, Mr. Barker says :—

"To the Right Hon. STRATFORD CANNING,
"Ambassador, etc.

" . . . It was with the greatest difficulty imaginable, and by mere accident, that I was able to procure for the King of Würtemberg a horse which was even defective as a horse to ride, though perfect as a stallion. All the promising colts that are bred by the Arabs are immediately bought up by the Viceroy of Egypt;

and a Russian equerry who has been here three months with a commission from his Sovereign to buy a string of fifty horses and mares, has purchased hitherto only *two* horses and one mare, of little value, and declares his despair of being able to acquire any more.''

END OF VOL. I.

